Reconstructions in Vedānta

Dr. Pravas Jivan Chaudhury

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Born : 1916 **Demise : 1961**

Preface

Professor Pravas Jivan Chaudhury was born in 1916 and passed away in 1961. During this short span he established himself as a philosopher of international acclaim with the rare gift of synthesising Science, Philosophy and Aesthetics. He received his initial training in Physics and then switched over to English; finally he received his training in Philosophy and emerged as a philosopher with equal mastery in all the three major aspects of human enquiry.

Professor Chaudhury had been to the U.S.A. as a Visiting Fellow of Cornell University and also as a Visiting Professor of South California University during 1959-60. On his way back, he took part as Vice-chairman in the Fourth International Aesthetics Congress in Athens in 1960.

His early writings are good specimens of his characteristic spark. When he takes up his pen in interpreting Vedanta philosophy, his writings speak openly about the depth of his vision. This shows that he had basically an Indian mind. The originality of his approach reflects his commitment and dedication to Indian philosophy with an emphatic reference to the ideals of Vedanta philosophy.

Professor Chaudhury boldly declares that Vedanta is the philosophy of world-understanding. He had constructed the outlines of an ideal philosophy which would unify the world and which is not essentially different from Vedanta. He believes firmly that philosophy is not merely an intellectual discipline; it is a spiritual discipline as well. Professor Choudhury argues that 'What is that which being known everything is known?' is the fundamental question of man; this is the question which is asked in Vedanta and is answered by Vedanta. The answer to this question lies in the realization of the identity of the ultimate metaphysical knowledge with the identity of self-realization on the part of the enquirer. In this way, Professor Chaudhury has reconstructed Vedanta philosophy as a kind of transcendental phenomenology. He has condemned sitting on the shore of the ocean and speculating on the things that may lie at its bottom. 'We must take the plunge', he argues. This, in his opinion, provides the much needed clue to constructing an ideal philosophy, a philosophy of the world, a philosophy which would be an interpersonal body of knowledge like science. 'To doubt the possibility of such a science and condemn all meditative researches in metaphysics as subjective illusions on abstract and antecedent grounds is idle and dogmatic.'

The excellence of Professor Chaudhury's vision in re-interpreting Vedanta consists in the discovery of its aesthetic dimension. Beauty is said to consist in the bridge between man and nature and between the finite and the infinite. Beauty emancipates man from his ego and brings him close to an everlasting reassurance of a higher universal self working in him from behind. Man thus becomes 'the creative man' and the universal self that is intrinsically realized by man within himself is the *Brahman* of Vedanta which is a subject-objectless pure consciousness and which is the spontaneous energizing principle of man in his fundamental quest for the ultimate Truth. This is *ananda* or Bliss. The poet or the musician or the dramatist are all essentially human beings not to be defined merely by their artistic capability, but by their inherent longing for a permanent unity where all sense of subject-object duality vanishes. What remains is 'a psychical distance' or a unique disinterestedness on the part of the subject towards his artistic creation. This is disinterested contemplation of an object for its own sake. In this sense, argues Professor Chaudhury in a remarkable way, that Shakespeare and Keats are both coming very close to the Indian ideal of life which, paradoxically though, starts with sorrows and sufferings of life only to be triumphantly transcended on to a stage of a higher Reality which is by its very nature *consciousness* and *bliss* par excellence.

Professor P.J.Chaudhury was my teacher at my doctoral level. This is an humble attempt on my part to put on record my profound gratitude and regards for a versatile scholar who always treated me with affection more than I actually deserved.

Pradip Kumar Sen Gupta
7.10.96
(Retd.) Professor of Philosophy
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The Perfect way knows no difficulties,
Except that it refuses to make preferences.
Only when freed from hate and love
Does it reveal itself fully and without disguise.

—*The Third Patriarch of Zen.*

☆ ☆ ☆

‘From every Sentence (of the Upaniṣads of Vedānta) deep, original and sublime thoughts arise, and the whole is pervaded by a high and holy and earnest Spirit. (In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upaniṣads (the Vedānta)... (They) are products of the highest wisdom... It is destined sooner or later to become the Faith of the people.’

— Schopenhauer

To Our Gurudeva

His Holiness Sri Sri Omkarnath Sitaramdas Deva.

.. Man is a wondrous temple, when it was made, the gods came and took shelter therein..!

Introduction

• *The religious need of India*

It will sound odd to many if I maintain that India needs religion most today. For it is generally known that India is religious-minded, and people from the rest of the world come here to see this land of ancient faith and piety. We are a poor and struggling lot here, but our meanest people have a kind of religious training that is striking to a foreigner, who is impressed by the crowds at the temples and the pilgrims at the holy places. I have no doubt that an average Indian believes in God and performs religious practices in one form or another in much greater measure than an average person in Europe or America. Yet, I submit that India needs today religion more than anything else. Only a religious revolution can save India from its present state of internal disunity and weakness and economic degradation, and from its squalor and confusion that even a passing foreign traveller cannot fail to mark.

What do I mean then by religion? What sort of religion do we already have in a large measure, and what do we lack?

Religion has three aspects. One is an implicit faith in some God who creates and rules the world and a feeling of communion and piety towards Him. This feeling may be expressed in the form of prayers and sacrifices. This kind of pure religious attitude has to be distinguished from another sort which consists in treating God as an instrument of one's worldly good and, so, worshipping Him not out of pure love and piety, but out of desire for power and wealth. This aspect of religion has an element of the original magical form of religion, where coercion rather than submission is the chief emotional attitude. It is believed by the worshippers that God or the particular deities can be moved to do the things wished for if approached in the correct way, and there are elaborate rituals for every kind of worship, for every kind of worldly end desired. In India, these two forms of religion are most prevalent.

There are people who approach God in their privacy through pure love and meditation, and there are others who perform diverse rites and ceremonies for the sake of worldly prosperity. In each case, there is a faith in the spirit as the author and ruler of the world, which is essentially a religious feeling. But in none of these forms of religion, there is any neccessary sense of moral obligation to society, or desire to improve the state of the world through developing and organizing public spirit or socio-ethical notions. God or the gods of India are conceived by the pure devotees as indifferent to the world or humanity, which is a sportive, illusory creation (*līlā* or *māyā*), and one's business is to know this truth and forsake the world and seek refuge in the author of this shadow show. This means apathy and resignation on the part of these devotees, who may have the highest truth, but not the truest religion. By a true religion, then, I mean one that is related more to this world than the higher or the spiritual one; one that inspires people to meet and work hard for the betterment of their environment.

These devotees should not have any apathy and resignation towards the world, but must actively work for the upliftment of their neighbours for whom the world is so far not illusory. This is why the great leaders of modern India, Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, and Mahatma Gandhi, took to social work, though they were Vedāntists, and knew that the world is a temporary affair and that there cannot be any escape from death, sickness, and sorrow that life entails. The *Gītā* stresses this social duty (*lokasaṅgraha*) for the devotees and urges them to act in a selfless way for the good of all. But, in spite of all this, the fact remains that a large section of the Indian people is socially inactive, and it follows a pure and private kind of religion which has, no doubt, its own truth, beauty and joy, but which is not the whole of religion.

These devotees are not actively anti-social, though some of them are engaged in professions and trades which, if they come to think of it, may not be wholly right. For instance, a person may be a businessman; he ordinarily thinks that it is no harm if he has to bribe some authorities and petty clerks in order to get his tenders accepted or bills passed. He takes the prevalent system for granted, for he believes the world to be but a passing show which one cannot improve, and one must concentrate on one's spiritual life, rather than on this worldly one. Thus he, though otherwise a very enlightened person and even a kind soul, indirectly helps corruption in society. He does not believe in any organization of society or strict law and order; for he trusts that God takes care of His children and that we cannot improve things by our reason and efforts. So he lets things drift.

The other sort of religious devotees in our country are less innocuous. They not only do not believe in social organization or strict moral codes, but positively want much laxity and scope for free enterprise, for only in such a state can they get whatever they want through their deities. These people offer prayers and sacrifices in right earnest for getting more money through any means, without ever thinking that any money got through unfair means is wrong and that it disrupts the country's economy and social harmony. Generally, the businessmen of our country take to this sort of religion, and they do not much care for the consequences of their adulteration of foodstuffs and medicines, and of their excessive profiteering or evasion of taxes. They do have a firm faith in God and in some moral codes as well, but they lack social sense altogether. Their religion does not teach them to be honest and aggressively good as citizens. They may give away large sums in charity, but never think of the cause of much poverty of the people or of giving better wages or providing better living conditions to their employees.

Let me speak of the third form of religion which is different from the above two forms and which India needs today. God, in this religious consciousness, is too mysterious and high above for man's direct knowledge and communion. It is useless for him to beg of God anything. God has given us intelligence, freedom, and capacity to work, and it is our duty to improve our state in the world by means of these powers. In doing this duty selflessly, or in the spirit of service to God, we can have a sense of communion with Him or participation in His creative work. Other people are regarded as brothers, as God is our common Father. Thus a strong social sense is the essential part of the religious consciousness of this type. This humanistic religion of sympathy and service is what we need more than our esoteric and ritualistic kinds of religion. For we are out to build up, for the first time in history, a unified, economically developed, and strong India. We are undertaking big projects, which need for their success honest and hard work, and any corruption will pull down all our cherished constructions.

We cannot overlook today the weaknesses and dangers in the way of our building up a new India. The forces of social disintegration—the differences between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, one linguistic group and another—are there just as there are corruption, squalor, and filth in the cities. We want a religion that will teach us how to live nobly and cleanly and in a corporate manner. We are used to thinking in terms of our personal and communal interest, not in those of general good. We must face facts and start thinking constructively to improve things. We must learn from our past mistakes in history and turn over a new leaf.

The idea of this new kind of religion is that, since the world is a passing show, we must not be too much attached to it. We must therefore shed greed and other narrow passions. But since it is after all created by God for us, and since He has given us powers to think and act, we must use these powers for the betterment of the world in the light of our best reason. We must have love and sympathy for the world. The moral of selfless action must be placed above esoterism and ritualism. The ethics of social justice must not be separated from religion, which must not be an escape and an opium for our people. Religion must teach us not only how to face death, but also how to face life. That much of the misery in our life is of our own making has to be understood, and a religion of a brighter and stronger sort has to be introduced. The great religious teachers of modern India have been telling us this very thing, but we have not as yet changed much. We need a religious revolution, without which all our socio-economic efforts will be of very little value.

● *Reconstructions in Vedānta*

The basic texts of the Vedānta philosophy, viz. the Upaniṣads, speak a language of direct revelation of the ultimate truth to the minds of Vedic sages. There is very little of speculation, and not much of argumentation. Some use of analogy is made to facilitate understanding of the truth, and some prescriptions of a psychological and moral nature are offered that are calculated to prepare the mind of the seeker for the experience of the truth, once it is understood in an analogical manner and accepted on faith. The assured and authoritative tone of the Upaniṣads is derived from the first-hand experience of the Vedic seers, and the great appeal of these scriptures for the Hindus rests on the belief that what could be experienced as the supreme truth and value by these venerable ancient sages can as well be done by others. This experiential and positivistic basis of philosophy, as contradistinguished from a speculative and hypothetical one, has an essential similarity with the modern method of phenomenological research introduced by Husserl in Germany. This meditative method of philosophy that delves deep into the consciousness and exposes its contents layer by layer till it reaches the bed-rock, the pure transcendental consciousness, was developed by K.C. Bhattacharya of Bengal independently of Husserl, but, I belive, in the spirit of the Upaniṣadic sages. The Yoga School of Philosophy of Patañjali treats philosophy as self-searching, and pure consciousness within as the core of all things and truths. I have sought here in two essays to follow the phenomenological method to reach the main conclusions of the Vedānta philosophy, viz. that the world is like a dream and only one's own foundational consciousness is real and is to be realized. I have also sought to interpret from the phenomenological standpoint the two pivotal but allied concepts of Vedānta, viz. those of perceptual error as an indescribable but given fact and of *māyā* or cosmic illusion, and I have employed them in my own way in the course of my construction. The result may be considered to be a phenomenological reconstruction of Vedānta.

But Vedānta may be approached in a quite different manner. There are traces of speculation and argumentation in the Upaniṣads and plenty of it in the later Vedāntic literature which grew out of the felt need for establishing the Vedic world-view on a rational basis against its rivals; this had no regard for the visions of the Vedic sages. Reason, not testimony, was required to prove the superiority of the Vedāntic position, and this meant that philosophy would have to be taken as a speculative venture and the best philosophical position would be that which offered the most plausible hypothesis. This may be broadly called the scientific approach in philosophy. As applied to Vedanta, this is complementary to the phenomenological one, for what is reached from the outside as the best possible hypothesis by reason may very well be verified in direct experience. This follows from the two-fold faith that reason can reach truth in its own way and that this truth will not be absolute certitude and of ontic stature unless it is realized as one's own foundational self which only cannot be logically doubted and may be said to have necessary existence. However that may be, the scientific method in philosophy is a legitimate and useful one in the circumstance when there may be very meagre cultivation of, and trust in, the meditative method and little faith in the testimony of the ancient sages. In one of the present essays I have determined as best I could the method and spirit of modern science and then I have taken thought on modern science itself in this scientific spirit. As a result I have reached certain very broad and profound conclusions which are the essential tenets of the Vedānta philosophy. This very modest effort at philosophizing on science in a scientific manner may be called 'Vedānta as a scientific philosophy', and considered as a scientific reconstruction of Vedānta.

Philosophy as a vision of the world not claiming any necessity or ultimate validity for itself follows from the scientific approach which is inductive, speculative and ever tentative. This approach in philosophy can never speak of what there really *is* but only what there could, under the present condition of our knowledge, plausibly be imagined to be. It can never speak of the unconditional knowledge and truth. A scientific philosophy must therefore be deontological and must be offered as the simplest and most adequate hypothesis under the present circumstances. But in the ultimate analysis this sort of philosophy has to be advanced as a simple prescription or appeal and not as a description or assertion of any kind. For the criteria of simplicity and adequacy, and of what have to be counted as given data for the hypothesis to take care of, have not so far been agreed upon and in principle cannot be. It is essentially a matter of preference and free decision so far as we can see it. Though we find in this realm some actual and broad agreement amongst members of a group of pepole belonging to some particular culture or coterie, such groups are numerous and of fluctuating nature. So that we have diverse and rapidly changing movements in thought in the history of philosophy, and to seek to hold by reason any one of them against the others is a vain endeavour. For one thing, what one may consider as an important datum of experience to be taken care of by a philosophical theory may be outrightly rejected by another as error or prejudice on the part of the former. Again, even if two persons agree on what is to be counted as data or given facts, they may differ on the criteria of simplicity and adequacy involved in considering which theory deals with the sum of facts most successfully. The wisest thing under these circumstances is to treat everything as more or less a matter of personal preference, and a philosophical theory as a personal world-view which one recommends to others. Truth thus considered is valuation and subjective. One cannot hope to discover the matrix of human beliefs and preferences and , so, arrive at a new objectivity in the manner of the theory of relativity that connected the relative spatio-temporal frames of reference by a law. But so far as there is to be found some actual agreement amongst people in a group over certain philosophical questions, and a general love in man for friendly discussions where one loves both to persuade and be persuaded, to convert and be converted, this deontological philosophy has a useful place in human culture.

I have shown in the essay 'Vedānta as a Scientific Philosophy' mentioned above how Vedānta as a scientific philosophy must be deontological. In a separate essay, which is called 'The Deontological

Vedānta', I have shown how this is in keeping with a very important movement in modern thought. However, I have sought to justify the Vedāntic teaching, which could not be rationally proved, in a way which could apply only to a certain version of this teaching. The version is more or less dualistic in that it holds the world to be existent and enjoyed as comparatively illusory and not to be cancelled altogether as a pure illusion like the snake in the rope.This is, however, the more popular version which I think could be more plausibly justified and, therefore, more confidently recommended. The other version, that of pure illusionism, which I personally have upheld in the other essays, may not be so appealing to many. Nevertheless, that version may still be adopted by one as a personal belief and recommended in good faith. People have different tastes, temperaments and cultural traditions, and while some may be repelled by the idea of absolute quiescence of the spirit, others may be attracted by this apparently negative ideal.

I am keenly aware of many gaps and loose ends in the present work. My own intellectual powers fall far short of the task of comprehension I have undertaken here. I know the task of philosophy is precarious for it attempts to connect or conceptualize the infinite variety of our experience. Can reason match the subtlety of nature? I cannot go all the way with the linguistic philosophers who follow the older anti-intellectualists in denying the possibility of conceptual knowledge and assert that 'everything is what it is',and philosophy must leave everything as it is; that every proposition has its own logic and to generalize is to be an idiot. The business of philosophy for them is to disconnect, not connect, things. I cannot make sense of the existentialists either. I believe that philosophy is a constant effort to connect or bring under concepts the manifold given to our senses, feelings and moral and religious sensibilities. Nevertheless, I am profoundly impressed by the element of choice or freedom in this work of conceptualization. There is to be exercised at every bend of the road one's free choice regarding what data are to be taken care of and what to be left out as irrelevant, and regarding what broad conceptual framework to be employed to cover the selected data . In such preferences one's own deep-rooted and indeterminable personal factors (such as emotions and moral religious sentiments imbibed in the formative period of one's life from one's family and society) come into operation. Therefore comprehensiveness of the philosophical conclusions reached and their objectivity become impossible ideals. But a philosopher, instead of giving up his job or redefining it as the linguistic and existential philosophers have done, must pursue it with enhanced determination. He should however be aware of this situation he is working under, and so guard himself against any dogmatism and large claims for his enterprise. He must bear in mind that much of what he might be offering as his conceptual knowledge of the universe is but his own beliefs and evaluations. He is giving himself out through his work which is not some impersonal thought. As such it has a value and significance in our culture where everyone of us desires to attain some kind of unified vision of the world we inhabit and life we live, and likes to know what views others hold. This inter-communication among persons on a philosophical plane helps them to develop their world-views.

It is in this self-critical spirit that the present essays are offered, though this spirit may not be found equally spread over them, where in places the author has been lured into a style of inspired writing. Philosophy is no logico- mathematical exercise, nor legal argumentation; it is nothing if not born and expressive of insights; but the insights must be offered with a sense of their essential relativity and limitations. Otherwise philosophy will read like prophetic literature and lose that atmosphere of freedom and flexibility, of adventure and openness, and wonder, which characterizes it.

P. J. Chaudhury.

Kena Upaniṣad

1

A Philosophical Exposition

A

Verse — I

By whom desired does the mind,[1] *urged on, descend,*[2]
By whom decreed does the first breath proceed,
By whom desired do men utter speech,
The eye and the ear— which god indeed directs?[3]

The question implies an awareness, on the part of the questioner, of the insufficiency of the knowledge of the self offered by empirical psychology. The self or mind is there pictured as a succession of mental phenomena—sensations, perceptions, thoughts, feelings and wills—with causal laws binding and ordering them. Psychology as a science seeks to discover the causal laws and so to bring order into the apparently haphazard mental world. This scientific knowledge of the self can explain, when well advanced, any mental occurrence in terms of its antecedent conditions and some law of recurrence (causal law) which connects the mental occurrence to the antecedent conditions. But this kind of scientific explanation does not fully satisfy our reason, for we enquire after the ground of these particular laws of recurrence, the existence of which psychology as a science presupposes, which it seeks to discover, and without which it cannot function as a science. Science means ordering of experience and it presupposes the existence of laws, for order means law-abiding behaviour. Now empirical psychology presupposes the laws of mental processes, but philosophy enquires into them and seeks their ground. This ground cannot be a cause in an empirical sense, as a certain mental occurrence is the cause or antecedent condition (not logically but temporally) of another. For then this ground would be subjected to a law instead of being a ground of all laws. It cannot be an empirical entity of any sort, but must be a transcendent one. Again, a law cannot be grounded on any material entity which itself is subject to laws; it must be consciousness then. Therefore the ground we are enquiring into must be transcendental consciousness. (And consciousness is transcendental; being the ground of all knowing it cannot itself be known as an empirical object, as we shall presently see more clearly). It is thus an agent who has devised laws.

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[1] This does not mean here Consciousness itself, but the mental processes of empirical psychology.

[2] On objects, i.e. knows, enjoys, or acts on them.

[3] The translation, in this essay, of the Upaniṣadic text, is as literal as possible, unless stated otherwise.

But a law is not only devised, it is also executed. However, the necessary connection between cause and effect in the empirical world cannot be understood in empirical terms, for neither the necessity nor the connection are sense-perceived. So, it appears to scientific understanding, as it appeared to Çārvāka and Hume, that causality is not binding and things may behave in any irregular fashion—e.g. the sun may not rise tomorrow. Yet things do behave regularly, showing that causality rules. This causality can be understood only in terms of a transcendental will that wills the empirical objects to move according to the laws. (Hence the question, 'By whom desired' and not 'By which thing caused?'). This will as the ground of laws also explains certain indeterminate features in psychology (as well as in physics) which have been found as objective or in Nature. Since the will is free, its laws being self-imposed, it can direct things in any manner it pleases; it may take a margin of freedom or latitude in certain regions of empirical existence, e.g. in the microphysical region in the physical world—as found by new physics—this freedom being called 'The Principles of Indeterminacy'.

So the designing consciousness must also be an executing will. To the question, how can the laws designed by the transcendental agent apply to the empirical world, the answer is that this world is imaged forth or projected by this agent just as our individual consciousness does a phantasy or dream world. The world is not foreign to the agent, but is its own creation.

Now, it is a transcendental agent or self that creates the empirical world and moves it according to the laws it has designed. This transcendent character of the agent must be noted for the fact that with the mind is associated an 'I'-sense or ego-feeling, by virtue of which it appears that there is an empirical self or the mind as an agent. But this is clearly an illusion for the simple reason that this empirical self itself is bound by the psychological laws, and the mind cannot help moving in the manner it does. It is not an agent at all but a patient. Hence arises the question of an agency behind the mind which is really impelled by the former as an inert thing.

That the empirical mind is not even a unitary entity or self has been discovered by some empiricists, e.g. Hume, who have therefore declared that we have no self. Buddha said the same thing, that we have no self, but a succession of impressions; but, then, he also taught that we can be aware of this succession and can free ourselves from its bondage. This implies that there is a being in us who himself does not change and who is essentially free. This is really the transcendental self, the ground of the empirical and the apparent one.

In the Upaniṣadic question, the ground of the mind, breath, speech, eye and ear are enquired into. Breath implies life or vital forces, and speech, eye and ear involve, besides the specific psychological faculties, the physiological adjuncts or trappings they have. The questioner then simply means to enquire into the transcendental conscious ground or self behind the psycho-physical processes that are felt to be blind and mechanical. The individual or empirical consciousness or self that appears to be associated with these processes have been known as illusory; and even when appearing as a unitary being, it is known as a patient subject to external laws rather than an agent designing and executing laws. Empirical study of the mind, body and matter will inevitably lead to this level of awareness, that is awareness of some transcendental consciousness as the maker and operator of the laws found in the empirical world. Science makes us aware of the laws it seeks to discover and formulate in order to organize sense-experience (internal and external) and this awareness of laws leads us to the overwhelming metaphysical question regarding the maker of laws.

Verse — 2

The Ear[4] *of the ear, the Mind of the mind it is,*
And the Speech of the speech, the Breath
of the breath as well,
The Eye of the eye; disowning[5] *all these*
(false identifications) the wise,
While from this world departed, arise immortal.

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[4] The Ear of the ear means the true agency or the ground of hearing behind the apparent agency, the psychological sense of hearing, or even behind the physiological ear, the organ of hearing which is also mistakenly conceived as an agency. So with regard to the mind, speech, breath, and the eye.

[5] Regarding the psychological faculties as not pertaining to the true self, but as external adjuncts only.

father and son are known. Of the latter pair, both are given as objects while in the former, the self is never given as an object. Therefore correlativity or mutual dependence is not established. The self is revealed by the occasion of knowledge of objects, but it is not proved that it is dependent for its existence on the latter. Its independent existence as pure subject-objectsless consciousness is given in a higher realization than that which reveals the self as the subject. This is *nirvikalpa samādhi* spoken of in Yoga. The scripture also speaks of it. Yājñavalkya explains to Maitreyī that after death there is no consciousness in the sense that there is no self-consciousness. This is because there is no duality of subject and object there and so one cannot know anything as an object (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II. 4.I3). Yet, this state is a positive one. The self, on transcending the self-conscious mode, becomes bare consciousness. This is Brahman which is without any differentiation, while the self-consciousness of the *jīvanmukta* is Īśvara which witnesses and wields the world of objects, knowing them as its imaginative creation, *Māyā*. Brahman is without Māyā, while Īśvara is the lord of it, *Māyādhīśa*. Brahman is the ultimate ground of everything while Īśvara is their proximate or immediate ground, their creator and knower. This distinction is very important though it is not very much observed in ordinary discourse and even in the scripture which was not meant to be a philosophical treatise.

Verses — 3-9

There not the eye goes, nor goes the speech, nor mind,
How can one teach It we know not, nor understand.
'Other than the known It is, above the unknown'—
Thus from the ancients we've heard, those who explained It.
That which no speech can express, through which[1] *speech expresses,..*
That which no mind can think, through which mind does think,...
That which no eye can see, through which the eye does see,...
That which no ear can hear, through which the ear does hear, ...
That which no breath can breathe, through which the breath does breathe,
That alone know you as Brahman, not what men worship.[2]

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[1] By means of, Brahman being the ground of all faculties.

[2] In the original, this last line is repeated after every line in the Verses 5 to 9, as indicated by dots. 'Not what men worship' means not any Īśvara or gods whom men worship thinking them as other than their own self.

The transcendental self, Brahman, found to be the ultimate ground of all our mental activities, cannot itself be an object of these. So, it remains unseen, unspoken (i.e. empirically unconceived, for speech signifies its objects through general concepts), and unknown (empirically). So it cannot be communicated or taught. Yet it cannot be said to be absolutely unknown. For, it reveals itself as the ground of every empirical knowledge as the latter occurs. Just as the sun reveals itself through little openings in a closed room, in the form of chinks, cracks, and keyholes. It is realized *notionally* as the essential being or ground of the timeless subject revealed in every knowledge; again *notionally*, through a philosophical introspection into the knowledge situation. This notional or philosophical knowledge, which certifies or warrants only the plausibility of the self as a subject and also as a pure subjectless being, is supplemented and perfected by *sādhanā* which yields the direct verification of these notions. The testimony of the ancients, i.e. scripture, is an aid to such an intellectual undertaking, as it gives us an initial faith and self-confidence.

Verses 5 to 9 assert this finding that the trancsendent ground of any psychological function cannot be an object of that function. This ground is Brahman which is different from the deities, including Īśvara, which man generally worships. But they depend for their existence and power on Brahman, who is thus the supreme power and should be the real object of worship. But, since this Brahman is our very self, we cannot really worship it if we realize its true being. It is not an object and not conceivable in any form; so, how can one worship it ? Even Īśvara, who, as the subject of all empirical knowledge and as consciousness imaging forth this world of objects— cannot be known as an emipircal object, is somehow conceivable as a person, a creator and a knower even like us, only greater in magnitude and excellence. So He may be worshipped. But this is not the absolute ground of the world which is absolutely inconceivable.

We may note here how the Upaniṣad makes itself proof to all positivistic criticism by pointing out that the ground of the empirical world cannot itself be empirically verified or even spoken of in an 'object-language'. For it belongs to a different logical type. The modern theory of types and of hierarchy of languages is implied in the verses 3 to 9. A function cannot be its own argument or a proposition cannot say anything *about* itself; this is what the modern theory stands for and this is what these verses teach us.

Now the question arises : Should we at all speak of higher order functions in higher order propositions if only the lower (empirical) order is readily known and communicated ? The answer of the positivists is that we may speak *about* the empirical propositions only to study their logical structure and to prove the impossibility of metaphysics by showing how metaphysical terms or propositions are empirically nonsense. Philosophy, according to them, is to clarify empirical knowledge and (thus) neutralize the metaphysical tendencies that thrive on vague and confused ideas. But this is not our answer. The reason or logic that leads us to such higher order propositions *about* empirical propositions is certainly different from what is used in science and commonsense. Yet it is not merely logical or semiotical with a purificatory and antiseptic function. It is not also an emotive or superstitious growth on scientific reason which the logical positivists seek to fight with their logic or linguistics (semiotic). Rather it is reason that gives us objective reality just as empirical reason does. This is transcendental reason possessed more or less by every sensible person and to ignore this is to narrow down one's cognitive possibilities drastically and arbitrarily. The positivistic theory of knowledge or meaning (of a proposition expressing knowledge) is what is verifiable in sense-experience. It is true of empirical or sense-verifiable knowledge only. As such it is a mere tautology. If it means that other forms of knowledge or meaning are non-existent, then the principle itself is meaningless by its very criterion of meaning. For, it cannot meaningfully speak of any form of knowledge other than the sense-verifiable. The positivistic criterion of knowledge and meaning then is a mere stipulation or a recommendation. It recommends only that kind of cognitive enterprise which is at our easy reach, readily and safely checkable, and of practical value too. This is understandable. But this expresses only man's biophysical nature, which, though it dominates him, should not dictate his philosophy or cognitive venture which is founded on and sustained by a broader reality of man's faculty of knowledge and by a wider conception of verifiability and value. Man's biophysical nature should not be the touchstone of all reality; man has a higher nature, not to be confused with the superstitious or sentimental ones, which are again biophysical, but a truly higher rational nature, if by reason we mean that which reveals objective truth. (We have intentionally avoided the word 'spiritual', for its certain connotations that do not apply here. By reason we certainly do not mean discursive reason only, but the faculty for knowledge of all grades).

B

Verses — 10-11

If you think 'Brahman I well know', a little[3] *indeed*
Of Its form you know, which you **are**, *gods as well.*[4]
And hence to be sought by you, determined.
'It's own, I think' (Replies the disciple).
I think not I know It well, nor know I know not.
Who knows this— he knows It who knows not he knows not.[5]

The Brahman is our own true self and also of gods. To know it requires self-knowledge which, as we just saw, is of a different order from empirical knowledge of objects. So any alleged knowledge of Brahman, the ultimate reality, got in an empirical manner, is but an error and confusion. Thus to think of Brahman as a substance, either vital, material, or even spiritual, is a mistake, for it is nothing but our own self that knows (in its knowing mood, as Īśvara) substance, spirit, matter, etc. It is not to be described in any empirical term, even in such as creator, sustainer, knower, etc., as applied to Īśvara, but by negatives only, *neti*, *neti*, not this, not this, as the Upaniṣad does. The tendency of the mind to grasp its very basis is an intellectual snare. The individual Self or consciousness (of men as well as of superior beings or gods) is really Brahman so far as it is consciousness, but it is narrowly circumscribed so far as it is individual, involving psycho-physical faculties which are the adjuncts of Brahman. So, to know individual consciousness as Brahman is to know it partially or fragmentarily. It is like knowing a piece of glass reflecting sunlight as the sun.

Brahman is thus not to be known in the sense we know any empirical object, nor in the sense we know individual selves. Yet

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[3] Only a small fraction of the true Brahman, that which are its physical and psychological limiting adjuncts and knowable as objects.

[4] Brahman as circumscribed by its limiting adjuncts appears in the individual and gods.

[5] There is a deliberate play on the word 'know' with its double meaning to rouse the reader and to incite him to solve the paradox. The last line simply means 'He who knows this formula knows Brahman and, so, he is then not aware of any ignorance regarding It.'

Brahman is not to be given up as absolutely unknowable. For, we do have a *notion* of it which is a presupposition of all our empirical knowledge. Philosophical introspection into the latter reveals it, though we cannot determine its nature in any empirical manner, it being the presupposition of all empirical thought. He who knows this principle or paradox about knowing Brahman really understands the mystery, and he may realize It fully (after having at first a notion of It). Realization of Brahman means salvation from the succession of births and deaths.

Verses — 12-14

Not thought by him who thinks it, not grasped when thought,
Not known by those who know It, they know who know not.

Intuiting It in every cognition,[6] *one is mortal no more,*
Gets strength by the Self, by knowledge wins deathlessness.

If here[7] *man knows It, truth he attains;*
If not, destruction is dire;

Realizing It in things and beings all about,
The wise, from this world departing, cross death for ever.

Brahman is said to be revealed in every cognition as its ground. As noted before, Brahman is not itself the knowing self or the subject in each cognition, rather it is the ground of the subject, pure unself-conscious Self, bare awareness which adopts the knowing and creative mood and becomes Īśvara. But this becoming of the absolute Being, this self-differentiation into subjective and objective poles, is apparent only, a Māyā, from an ultimate point of view. From this standpoint of Brahman or pure consciousness the world is never created or projected in imagination and known as such on the same level of reality which contains It (Brahman). Just as the dream objects are created and known by us in a different plane of reality than that in which we create and know ordinary objects, so are Īśvarahood and His fancied creation and knowledge of the world to Brahman which is therefore not to be characterized by creativity and subjecthood. We know the dream objects to be not really existing, but appearing only, not mere nothings, yet not to be compared or ranked with empirical objects; so does Brahman know its Īśvarahood and the fancied world, externally appearing, but not existing.

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[6] The original is '*prati-bodha viditam*', meaning literally 'known with regard to every cognition'. Every act of understanding reveals Brahman as the ground.

[7] In this life.

Thus there are these levels of reality. Brahman, the highest, becomes, *as it were* (i.e. in imagination), Īśvara imaging forth an knowing and imaginary world which He knows as real as individual egos (*Jīva*), who, in His turn, can image forth fantasy worlds knowing them as imaginary but also as real in a deluded mood (as in dreams). Thus Brahman is immanent in every level, but transcendent also. It does not accept creatorship and knowership (i.e. Īśvarahood) as its own real characters, just as we do not accept our similar characters as adopted in imagination or dream. The world, as it appears to us, then, is a dream within a dream, so to say. It is known as a fantasy by Īśvara while He and His very knowing are known as a fantasy by Brahman which thus denies the reality of any creation and knowledge of the world even in fancy. Brahman denies the reality of the empirical world even as we deny the reality of an object seen in a dream that was itself within a dream, or of a snake seen in an illusion which itself appears to be a mistake or error and is disbelieved.

To Īśvara, Māyā, i.e. illusory appearance of the world , is real (as the world really appears), but to Brahman this Māyā is unreal (as the world does not really appear, but only does so illusorily). To Īśvara the world is neither real (for it appears as an object of imagination) nor unreal (for it really appears or has derived reality) and so indescribable either as real or as unreal (*anirvāchya*), but to Brahman the world is unreal (*tuçcha*) as this illusory appearance itself is illusory. Of course, so far as this illusoriness of the illusory is itself real, the world is real to Brahman and enjoys a derived reality two stages removed from the ultimate reality, the ground of all reality. Thus the world is neither pure nought nor Brahman, literally an identity, both of which are impossible ideas. The statements in the scripture as well as in the commentaries speaking of Brahman as a pure identity must be interpreted in this light and not literally.

It may be questioned that the Upaniṣads have spoken of Brahman as creating the world (e.g. Bṛh. Up. I. 2) out of its own substance. How can then this creator Brahman and Its creation be regarded as unreal? To this we may answer in the words of Śaṅkara: 'The scripture has not indicated the two forms of Brahman to establish both as true, but has simply enquired into the two popularly conceived and accepted forms in order that they might be negatived and the pure incorruptible form of Brahman established, (Śaṅkara's commentary on *Brahma Sūtras*, III. 2. 22). The scripture, after speaking of Brahman in various terms, ends with *neti*, *neti*, not this, not this. It is the lower Brahman or Īśvara that is negatived, for He is conceivable, viz. as a person, creator, sustainer, destroyer, and knower, while the true or higher Brahman cannot be conceived or spoken of at all in any empirically meaningful term as it is pure consciousness itself, the ground of all such conceptualization or speech.

C

In this section there is a story which runs thus. When the Devas got victory over the Asuras, they thought they were the real agents and not that Brahman ordained it and they were only instruments of Brahman. So Brahman appeared in the disguise of a Yakṣa and challenged the powers of Agni (the Fire-god), who could not burn a straw, and then of Vāyu (the god of the atmosphere) who could not move it. Then Indra (the king of the gods) approached It, but It vanished. Pārvati stood there and told Indra that It was Brahman who had come to break the conceit of the gods. Because these gods came near Brahman, they became superior to the other gods and because Indra first knew Brahman, he became the foremost of them in knowledge and power.

The teaching of this story is plain enough. It is that everything in the world is ultimately grounded on Brahman which is the real agency behind all the apparent ones that are but its accessories only. (Yet the agency of Brahman is but what is adopted in imagination and not a real or essential character of it, the transcendent will that governs the world is its passing fancy, as we noted before). The appearance of Brahman for a short time to the gods teaches that we have at first a momentary realization of it, which, though immanent in Nature, is hidden by it. Yet when once Brahman bursts on the mind of a person for even a moment, he becomes regenerated and will have a mental mood to realize Brahman permanently. This he will achieve through mental culture, *sādhanā*.

The Awakening of the Self

2

The lowest state of being in which man is found is the unconscious state when he knows nothing but merely lives under the forces of nature. His body functions and develops and resists to some extent disease and death, but all without any awareness on his part of these things and obviously governed by the laws of matter and life. The latter also cannot fully explain this state of being and we have to imagine some conscious purposive mind or intelligence operating behind these laws. This mind being a spirit, cannot be imagined to act on and govern the body of man in any other way than that it projects the appearances associated with the body in the manner they are found. The spirit and matter cannot be related but by this relation of subject and object. We can only understand things in terms of our experience which tells us that matter is but appearances to our mind which is a spirit and which can also project similar appearances and take them as objective or external as in imagination, illusions and dreams. So that we have to think of our bodily being as appearances projected by some mind not our own, our mind, which appears later in that body, being a mode of this original mind as our dream-mind is of our waking one. This original mind must also be thought to be a trans-individual or universal mind, for there are many such bodies and material objects all interconnected in a systematic whole showing some over-all plan and purposiveness in its form and movements.

Now this over-mind projects the appearances out of a playful abundance and love of experience as we do ordinarily through imagination, dreams and aesthetic activities. We seek experience for its own sake and the exercise of our imaginative faculty so that we secretly enjoy the apparently painful situations we fabricate in these moods though they seem to be forced on us. And the secret of this fabrication and covert enjoyment is that the projecting mind should lose much of its self-consciousness and adopt such a mode of form that it takes as more or less real or given what is but its own creation. The mind cannot both know something to be its imaginary product and know it to be given. The mind, in order to enjoy its creations forgets its authorship and takes them as encountered in reality. How can this happen? In our ordinary life we have an experience of the given object and, so, can imagine our figments to be such objects. But how can the Overmind at all derive this idea of the real or the given object where there is nothing else than itself to start with? The answer is that it is a self-conscious spirit that finds itself as given to itself, a 'you' that cannot be thought away. The same happens to our own individual self-consciousness which is at once an 'I' and a 'you'. The 'you' is not absolutely an alien but tinged with 'I'-hood when I contemplate myself as I do in abstract thinking and also in self-reproach and self-approbation. Yet it is undeniably encountered as a given object and irreducible to the subject. The universal spirit, being self-conscious, is thus subject-object in itself, and it can superimpose this idea of givenness to products of its imagination for self-beguilement. Again, for this purpose it has to abandon to a great extent, along with its self-consciousness, its single and total vision of things and to limit itself to narrow and separate aspects of the world leaving out much as dark gaps in the total picture. It, therefore, associates itself to animal and human bodies which live apart and have a physiological basis of knowledge such that the spirit housed in any one of them can have a peep at a very limited portion and aspect of the world projected by it. The body is a self-created means for diversifying and circumscribing the knowledge of the cosmic mind which wants to enjoy its creation as does a dramatist or any beholder of his play who assumes the diverse points of view of the characters of the play and, so, much ignorance and separativeness for the sake of enjoyment. Aesthetic sympathy entials this self-diversification and self-limitation besides self-forgetfulness. The enjoying self becomes protean in nature, sees the world through the eyes of the imaginary characters, loses itself, so to say, in the play, and comes back to its own with a sense of enrichment when the play is over.

However, as in the play as well as in dreams, the loss of self-consciousness is never complete. If it were so, there would be no secret enjoyment. The self is unself-conscious so far as it appears to suffer and avoid this suffering but it is self-conscious so far as it owns and enjoys this suffering. The self has thus within itself two modes of being, one self-conscious— creative of the suffering and secretly contemplative of it, and another unself-consciously undergoing this suffering. Moreover, a part of the enjoyment in a play is derived from the awareness of the play as a play and not as a reality, and though this is not true of the dreams, yet that dreams break sometimes because their extreme absurdity shows that the waking self does not totally lose itself. The waking of the self from dream or deep sleep at an appointed time, which is a common experience, also shows that it is not wholly unself-conscious. The world in our ordinary everyday mood appears to be as real as a dream does to the dream-self; so, the cosmic self in us is then dreaming, while the world in our more lucid moments appears to be an aesthetic object or a play, and then the cosmic self in us is imagining with *less* loss of self-consciousness. With greater self-awareness the self may be taking its fabrications with less seriousness, so much so that it may totally withdraw itself from them, thus cancelling them and itself relapsing into complete quiescence. This itself is a form of delight complementary to the delight in creation and self-abnegation, and to enjoy both at once being impossible, the cosmic self may be thought to create time so as to enjoy them alternately. Thus it alternately creates and withdraws, lapses into self-forgetful moods and relapses into self-awareness. But it never completely loses its self-awareness, otherwise it could not come back to its own. Its descent into the lower modes of being is a matter of degree with the possibility of an ascent. However, great may be the loss of self-awareness on the part of the Overmind, it remains the ultimate governor of the whole performance which requires its success both in self-oblivion and self-mastery. The cosmic self loses itself to find it again, forgets to recollect again, but all through this game it keeps a perfect control over itself and enjoys from behind the diverse experiences and the projection and withdrawal of modes.

Now this is the downward movement of the spirit, a study of which reveals the complementary upward movement too. The latter appears to us as the awakening from the dream of life. The first stage of our being in evolution was bodily existence in which we had no self-consciousness and we were like animals governed by natural laws, and, as such, we were creations of the cosmic spirit as objects. We had then no being for ourselves, but only for the cosmic self. When self-consciousness appeared in animals, they may be said to attain humanity and even now in the early stages of our life in the mother's womb and outside it for some time after our birth we traverse in a short space the evolutionary history of our race. We remain, before we attain self-consciousness, as beings for the cosmic self and for other self-conscious human beings. We are things, biological objects. And when one attains self-consciousness one is aware of an 'I' and the world over against one, the world including other persons. We are persons or selves amongst other persons or selves against the background of a physical world. The world and other persons are known as objects of curiosity and pleasure and pain, and this knowledge and the feelings are owned by the self. The self feels some sense of freedom too, learns from experience and adjusts itself to the world to maximize its balance of pleasure over pain. But in this early stage his real cognitive, moral and aesthetic senses do not appear. The self is egotistic and whatever or whoever is pleasurable is valued by it, and it knows objects only with this narrow self-interest. It does not treat objects or persons as ends in themselves, objects to be known and enjoyed and persons to be sympathized with and served for their own sake. This it does at the next higher stage in spiritual development. Most people attain this stage in their mature age and humanity at large attained this stage in its evolutionary history long ago. What man attains through his spiritual efforts is handed down to the future generations. Prophets and saints helped in the general awakening of man. However, his second stage is marked by disinterestedness to the objects in the sense that the self does not approach them with any narrow selfish motive but with love. A sense of kinship with them is felt dimly. The scientists' curiosity may often be tinged with a practical interest but a philosopher, even if he be a pragmatist, seeks to know reality for the very love of knowledge. The pragmatic theory of knowledge he holds has no pragmatic value, it only satisfies the philosopher's sense of wonder and his desire to appropriate more of the world through knowledge. Again, in this stage, the self enjoys the beauty of objects irrespective of its practical value and it feels a moral obligation to share the joys and sorrows of other persons, to enhance the total happiness of his people. It goes out of his narrow self to identify itself with others. This is in fact enlightened self-interest, an enlargement of the self through love, realization of a higher order of self beyond the ordinary ego.

Now mankind may be said to have stopped at this stage of development. Yet there have been many prophets and saints all over the world from ancient times who have been affirming of another order of being waiting for man to be realized. This is where the self of a man realizes all objects as images shadowed forth by it in a sportive spirit, and all individual selves, including that of the enlightened person, as assumed modes of this one creative self or Overmind. Love of knowledge, beauty and goodness are but faint reflections of this highest realization and the delight in them is a remote echo of this divine bliss and beatitude. Disinterested pursuit of knowledge, beauty and moral good, which is rightly held high in our culture, should not be regarded as the ultimate value marking the highest reach of humanity. It is wrongly ranked with our religious quest, the search for divine life. It is but a prelude to this latter effort of man to realize his ultimate good, the true nature of his self. Reality of the objects we want to know, their beauty we love to enjoy, and the other selves we seek to fraternize with in our moral activities, are but derived from the same essence of which our seeming self is a mode. We but seek to know this essence or spiritual background all through our evolutionary progress which is consummated in direct self-knowledge. When an individual self becomes aware of the derivative nature of his individuality and the shadowy one of the world, he is released from the bondage of these. He enjoys these as one does one's imagination without much self-delusion and when he dies he is one with the over-mind. But the latter goes on with its sport and so the world and the individual selves, suffering joys and sorrows naturalistically instead of enjoying them as self-created feelings, go on. These released selves, therefore, self-consciously indulge in this sport, enjoying actively natural joys and sorrows of the bound selves which the latter suffer passively and blindly. Sometimes they come down to help others to awaken from the dream of life. But all these aids to self-knowledge and spiritual progress are but within the world of *māyā*, mere shows essentially controlled by the self-conscious over-mind (Īśvara) who can and does wake up from his day-dream when it wishes. It becomes weary of the sport at some stage, and then becoming aware of the whole world of matter and individual conscious beings as a superfluous creation, cancels them as we sometimes do our fantasy-world. Then the individual bound selves along with the released ones become merged in a quiescent state of the over-mind where there is no object, no thought or feeling, but perfect self-illumined silence and bliss.

The Overmind now enjoys self-identity and quiet till it becomes weary of this state and starts creation. Underlying both these movements, a forward one of creation and self-oblivion and a backward one of withdrawal and self-recollection, there is the delight and the freedom of this over-mind. This is the ultimate nature of this mind which is said in the Upaniṣads to be essentially of the nature of *rasa* and all creation as the manifestation of delight. (*Raso vai saḥ* and *Ānandarūpamamṛtam yad vibhāti*). The bound and blind souls of the world are therefore destined to get release from their worldly bondage when this play of *māyā* breaks up in cosmic dissolution (*pralaya*). Some souls are, however, as we have seen, enlightened and released from the bondage even before this *pralaya*. They are more fortunate in that they actively enjoy the world and its 'natural' joys and sorrows before this final total release or quiescence. They become one with the cosmic-mind as a creator and enjoyer (i.e. as Īśvara) before they are merged into its undifferentiated state (Brahman). The bound souls do not pass through this stage of self-conscious and active enjoyment of the variety of objects of knowledge, beauty and love, known as make-believe things of their own making and eventually cancelled. The bound souls may be said to be unself-consciously enjoying these objects even when they take them for given realities and blindly and egotistically act upon and suffer them with little sense of knowledge, beauty and moral good. For these souls are essentially the same spirit of which they are modes. And they enjoy these objects a little less unself-consciously or more enlightenedly in their purely cognitive, aesthetic and moral attitude to the world—which attitude, if further developed, results in the clear self-consciousness of the over-soul. The latter stage is followed by the quiescent one of bare self-knowledge of the over-soul. Thus man passes through four stages to reach the fifth or final one of quiescence from which he descends to the lowest. These are, first, the bodily, where he is but an object for conscious beings and possesses no self-consciousness; second, the egotistically self-conscious; third, the enlightenedly self-conscious; and fourth, the clearly self-conscious. The middle two stages, the second and the third, are those of awakening of man from his sleep or his rising from death, so to speak. He has continually to forsake his worldly life he finds himself in to win the other-worldly life that is divine. He has to die in order to live. Yet all through his life and death he is in the hands of his over-soul, who pulls the strings from behind, who he is in essence, and who is ever falling asleep to dream of things as so many dream-selves, but never quite losing itself in the dream. The first four different states of man are but different degrees of self-consciousness retained by this over-soul in its assumed modes, proportionate to the self-oblivious pseudo-self-consciousness adopted in these modes. The fourth state of clear self-conscious creativity may be treated as a mode of the fifth state of bare self-knowledge which may, therefore, be identified, as the original self, with absolute self-consciousness; with this much difference that in the fourth state the self, though aware of itself as above the world of objects, which are its free creations, thinks of itself as a creative self, while in the fifth state it realizes itself as perfectly free and self-sufficient being without any determinate nature or obligation. It creates, no doubt, but that is a free play of its sense of abundance. And though it is said to be of the nature of delight or *rasa,* because of its love of creation and destruction, manifestation and self-recollection (these contrary tendencies it satisfies alternately through time), yet that is a more indeterminate and inclusive character than creativity which is a form of its manifestation. It is a character which is the least determinate we can imagine, and since the original self, as absolutely without any character, is unimaginable and unspeakable, and, so almost a void to us, we cannot but think of it as delight or *rasa*. May be the essential self is something indescribable, to be realized and never spoken of, but then it falls completely outside our ordinary experience and universe of discourse and we had better not started talking about it. Remembering then our afore-mentioned methodological principle (which involves solipsism that is hard to escape) that we can think no more than we have experience we may conclude that the essential self within the highest reach of man in his self-knowledge or waking, is the quiescent self of the nature of *rasa,* delight. The next highest, and, perhaps more enjoyable and understandable, and certainly more approachable, is the clear self-consciousness which regards the world as its creation and enjoys its freedom and creative power. We may call these two states as those of Brahmanhood and Īśvarahood respectively.

God : A Rational Approach

3

Reason approaches God through a dialectical process that takes it successively to new and higher truths, revealing limitations in that previously found and also enlightening reason at each epoch of succession. It is as if the knowledge of the ultimate truth is latent in reason, which works it out in a few steps while unfolding itself at each step. Let us see how it happens.

To start with, reason is *sensate* or blind. We have this mode of reason when we are infants, absent-minded, or sleepy, when we cannot recognize and relate sensations through memory and understanding and cannot tell what is what. We do not *know* anything then, but only sense fleeting impressions, one after another, without being conscious even of the succession of the impressions and the fragmentary character of our world of objects. But reason transcends this stage and recognizes and relates sensations under concepts and has determinate knowledge of things. This is *discursive* reason, which reveals a new dimension of reality, a conceptual world, over and above the thin and threadbare sensible world revealed by sensate reason. This new knowledge and a more enlightened mode of reason are induced by some experience of sensate reason which it could not comprehend without enlarging and transforming itself. This incomprehensible experience was the recurrence of similar sensations in similar configurations, that is, some law and order in the sensible manifold. Thus reason itself at some stage discovers its own limitations under the stress of some new and strange experience that reality presents to it. The reason that is aware of its limitations is already an enlightened one, a regenerated reason, so to say. Thus reality leads reason step by step to a fuller comprehension of it, shaking it out of slumber, as it were, out of narrowness and obscurity.

Discursive reason knows reality as determined in space and time by the law of causality. Further, it knows reality as categorized under the categories of substance, attribute and quantity, by virtue of which we have everything as what it is, a subject of some attributes (or predicates, when stated in propositions), and we have everything as having extension in space and time, being big or small, temporary or lasting, one or many. This is the reality that ordinarily commonsense reveals to us; science enlarges and refines upon it. But reality is vaster and richer than what discursive reason, in the shape of commonsense and science, discloses to us. There are certain new and undeniable experiences which discursive reason cannot comprehend without transforming itself. That is to say, discursive reason discovers certain aspects of reality which refuse to be categorized under any of the categories. Thus it finds that though objects are determined in space and time by the law of causality, it does not know the reason behind any particular causal law. Though it is found that objects follow one another according to law, so that fire always warms and water cools, but it is not known why it is fire that warms and water that cools and not otherwise. In other words, why this particular system of causal laws and so this particular world and not any other? Again, though causal laws are found operating quite uniformly, it passes understanding (i.e. discursive reason) why they should. What should be the connecting link between two events which appear as cause and effect? Is there any necessity that the cause (e.g. fire) must produce the effect (warmth)? Necessity presupposes a number of alternatives and a barring out of these, leaving no choice. But discursive reason cannot think of such a situation in Nature, where events simply occur and follow one another and never appear to be either chosen by some agent or forced upon him. Thus discursive reason cannot account for the operation of causal laws and must regard them as non-necessary and provisional, liable to failure any moment. But then it also has to confess its ignorance as to why the laws at all work. Supposing there were perfect freedom or randomness in the world, then there would be a negligibly small chance of fire warming man consecutively for more than, say, ten times, and so the fact of fire warming us every time we approach it would be nothing but a strange coincidence or miracle. It is like moving haphazardly in a large crowd and meeting one particular person every time you knock against one, or, say, like a person with some physical discomfort always knocking against a doctor, or a student against a teacher.

So discursive reason cannot understand the operation of causality. Modern science has not helped it a bit in this matter. For new physics has revealed that the most elementary processes, the microphysical ones, show a definite latitude or freedom, and the ordinary processes, the macrophysical ones, being but the mass effects of the elementary ones, are not to be considered as strictly determined. They are loose-jointed, so to say. Yet, how there can be any determinacy or jointedness at all—new science fails to answer. Anything might happen in the

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interval between a cause and its effect; yet nothing happens. Can this interval be shortened indefinitely? New science, or Relativity physics, helps very little. For it shows that no action can proceed with a speed more than the velocity of light. Thus the problem of causality is not a whit lightened for discursive reason by new science which is a refinement of it. Rather, it has brought, as all refinement does, the problem to a sharp relief. Discursive reason now views the world as essentially riddled with a mystery. It should be basically a Heraclitean world, with objects moving haphazardly; but it is not so for some cause unknown to discursive reason, which can only regard the operation of natural laws as the workings of a continuous miracle. But who is the miracle-worker? Discursive reason is confounded and keeps silent.

Again, the interrelation of diverse things in the world, from the atoms to the planets, and the perfect adaptation of means to ends in the biological phenomena, point to some design or purposiveness, though discursive reason cannot know its character.

But this awareness of the elements of reality incomprehensible to discursive reason, this awareness of puzzles of understanding, means that discursive reason has already enlightened itself. It has known its limitations and has a dim apprehension of a reality beyond the conceptual world of science and commonsense. Philosophical thinking works in this transformation and the higher kind of reason that emerges at this stage and refines itself under the stress of new realizations is *speculative* reason. Discursive reason reveals a neat and trim, ordered universe while speculative reason finds a vaster realm of freedom at the back of it (the ordered one) and explaining it. This newly-got realm is free of all the categories of discursive reason or the principles of understanding. It is a transcendent one containing nothing that can be classed with anything known in the conceptual world of science and commonsense. That is, there is nothing spatio-temporal here, nothing that is a substance or a quality, nothing that causes anything and nothing that has a quantity. Yet this is a realm that somehow accounts for the particular causal laws and other features of the conceptual world and especially for the working causality there. What to think of this realm then? Speculative reason calls it 'cosmic consciousness' on the analogy of 'individual consciousness' and thinks of the particular phenomena of the world as arbitrarily created by this cosmic consciousness by a feat of miracle, as individual consciousness creates images. And it thinks of causality as a manifestation of some order that is willed by the cosmic consciousness which images forth objects, one after another, according to some self-imposed rules. So the causal laws are not strictly necessary. (Discursive reason naively regards them as necessary, but, as shown above, comes to realize its mistake and then faces the paradox of causality). The connecting link between the cause and its effect is not any necessity but free will. Yet, since the cosmic consciousness creates the world from beyond time and space, being itself transcendent and a creator of space and time, (it creates the world in an eternal now), the world is, in a sense, already created or an accomplished affair, so that everything is predetermined. The world as it unfolds before us in space and time is the single vision for the cosmic consciousness that comprehends the whole world—its past, present, and future—in one sweep in no time. Hence, though everything is predetermined it is not necessary in the sense that everything is freely chosen by the creator. And thus only can the problem of causality be solved. The problem appears at the level of discursive reason grown critical and it dissolves at the level of speculative reason that finds a transcendent ground of causality.

By thinking in terms of consciousness and its free imagining only can speculative reason hit upon a transcendent ground of the conceptual world. If it were conceived of as a first cause, as discursive reason sometimes mistakenly does to explain the mystery of creation, there would rise the obvious and irrefutable objection that if it is a cause, as fire is a cause of warmth, it must be, in its turn, caused. If it were conceived as a substance, either psychological, vital, or material (e.g. as love, desire, will, vital force, or mechanical energy), it would have been asked, 'What are its attributes? What has caused it? How big or small is it and how far durable?' If in reply any attribute were mentioned, then the thing would become a natural object and as such could not explain Nature (conceptual world) except by a big fallacy. We may call it a naturalistic fallacy. If any attribute were denied, and also any spatio-temporal character or cause, then the substance would become a mere name, a bare abstraction. It can easily be seen how reputed thinkers have fallen into one or the other of these errors of thought, namely, naturalistic fallacy and false abstractionism, which arise out of one's inability to rise above discursive reason and so the conceptual world, to explain the mysteries of the latter, particularly of creation. Therefore, conceiving the ground of the (conceptual) world under any category that applies to the world itself, either substance or causality, is a snare to thought against which Kant has sufficiently cautioned us. Yet reason suffers from an illusion that its discursive mode might be able to solve the mystery of the world. This is a fruit of our too much attachment to science and so we have bold instances of such faulty speculation even after Kant, e.g. Nietzsche's will as ultimate reality, Bergson's 'élan vital', and some materialists' energy or wave-motion. (Here when we speak of the will of the cosmic consciousness, we do not mean any naturalistic will. It is transcendental, though it is immanent in us in the sense that our human will is created and sustained by it and we can partake of this cosmic will by transcending our ordinary will. This we shall see presently).

Cosmic consciousness, being no substance and no cause in the usual sense, does not belong to Nature and is not conceivable under any of the categories of discursive reason. It is transcendental in this sense. It exists neither here nor there but everywhere, neither now nor then but in an eternal now, and it does not cause but creates, quite miraculously and freely, undetermined by any law. It is not a substance but creates substances and it is not a cause but creates and sustains causality in Nature. So it is non-matter (no-thing) and is freedom itself. Thus the concepts which are applied to this cosmic consciousness (or universal intelligence) by speculative reason are all transcendental in the sense that they defy the comprehension of discursive reason (for they transcend the latter's categories). Discursive reason cannot understand 'everywhere' and 'eternity', the terms 'all' and 'infinity' tease it out of thought. It knows determinate objects only. So also discursive reason cannot comprehend freedom and creativity which are the opposites of determination and causation which it understands and which characterizes all determinate objects. Cosmic consciousness is described in such transcendental terms, for it is the transcendental ground of the natural world and as such cannot itself have any naturalistic character.

So far it goes well with speculative reason. But certain elements of reality appear before it which sets it wondering and eventually draws out of it a finer mode of apprehension to accommodate the new realizations. Cosmic consciousness *images forth* objects of the world of sense and discursive reason; yet these are *known* by the individual consciousness or mind which can image forth individual objects such as those in dreams, fancies, and illusions. What is then the relation between the two minds? Let us examine the nature of the individual mind. It is no substance, for it reveals substance. It is not in time and space, for it comprehends temporal succession and spatial extension. (To know change, the mind has to hold together different phases of the changing object in time and so has to be simultaneously in contact with the phases. It, therefore, cannot itself change but is a changeless ground of all changes). It has no such determinations as a natural object has, for it knows these determinations. So it is not an object for discursive reason to know; it is a transcendental object. Speculative reason will hold it to be an unknown transcendent ground of the known world.

Yet it is not quite unknown, for it is very intimately known as a subject. 'It is different from the known and yet above the unknown', says the *Śruti (Kena Upaniṣad).* Any knowledge of an object reveals the subject, the 'I'. This knowledge of the subject, being of a different kind from the knowledge of an object, has to be denoted by a different name. Let it be called 'self-knowledge'. And the mode of reason that reveals the self may be called *intuitive reason.* Those who have not developed this mode of reason deny their selves. The self is consciousness itself and not a thing that has consciousness as an attribute. To believe in a self that is a thing with consciousness as its attribute is to commit the naturalistic fallacy again. By adding that it is a spiritual substance we do not improve matters but create confusion. The self is consciousness and cannot be an object of knowledge, but is self-evidently known as a subject and symbolized by 'I'. It is realized as an eternal being, independent of the bodily and psychological adjuncts which are themselves known as objects by it. Thus we know the sense-organs and nerves, and their activities, also certain associated psychological phenomena such as sensation, perception (involving conception) and reasoning—which are cognitive, and certain affective tones such as pleasure and pain, and love and disgust, and also certain conations like attention and will to react to the objcet known, either positively or negatively. All these things are known along with the ego-sense which is the constant accompaniment of them. This ego-sense is the feeling that the psycho-physical organism is the agent of activities like knowing and willing and a patient of suffering like pleasure and pain. The subject or the self knows all these psycho-physical adjuncts (*manas, buddhi, ahaṃkāra,* and the *indriyas*) as objects and so is essentially different from and independent of them. Nothing that is known can explain knowing or consciousness (without begging the question) which is thus quite apart from the known. And as knowing is the same thing as the knower, the self (the subject or mind), the latter is also independent of the known, in particular of the psycho-physical adjuncts of knowledge. We do not 'know' because of our senses, nerves, attention and sensing and perceiving activities, as these are only accompaniments of knowledge and are themselves known.

That the self is independent of the psycho-physical adjuncts (*upādhis*) is seen from such a judgment as this: 'I know that I was not there when the earth was a ball of fire and I shall not be there when it is all covered with ice'. Here the knower 'I' is certainly different from the known 'I' denoted by the other two "I's", otherwise the judgment would be meaningless which it is not. The reason is that the knower 'I' is the eternal self whereas the known one is the psycho-physical adjunct of this self. Thus intuitive reason reveals the self to be an eternal witness, outside the bounds of space and time, unborn and undying. It witnesses objects as perceived when it is associated with a psycho-physical organism while it witnesses objects as unperceived (that is, is aware of them as possible objects) when it is not so associated. The latter case occurs when one is in deep sleep or when one is not physically present or attending to certain objects. The objects exist in spite of their being not attended to by the individual's senses and other psychological trappings, and the fact that the individual does not doubt this existence of unperceived objects reveals that they are objects of awareness for the self that transcends the psycho-physical apparatus (the individual as such), it being the eternal witness. And since this witness is aware of everything, perceived or not, it is universal or cosmic in scope. The self of an individual is then a transcendent, all-knowing subject or an infinite intelligence.

Now the question is : Are there as many such infinite selves as there are individuals? Apparently each individual has his own infinite intelligence or self, for, out of the sum total of all the possible perceptions that make up the infinite and eternal world, each individual is aware only of a particular portion as perceived and of the rest as unperceived or perceivable. Each individual mind is marked by a specific world of perceptions and possibilities of perceptions in the field of its awareness. My perceptions are only possible objects for another and *vice versa*. Thus there is a difference amongst individual selves with regard to the objects perceived. But this difference is not real or ultimate. For we have persons amongst us who can perceive others' perceptions, read others' thoughts and feelings, and perceive past and future events and those occurring beyond the reach of their senses. This extra-sensory perception (known as E.S.P.) is a well established fact in modern para-psychology and this points to the unity of the self, the infinite mind. Individuals are really one as knowers; they have the same form and content of knowing. Ordinarily they do not realize in full the potentiality of their minds and so remain individuals even as knowers, each carrying with him a separate world-picture just as each has a separate bodily and psychological outfit. Yet even in our ordinary manner we are sometimes aware of the 'common factor' in our minds, the existence of a universal intelligence, as we consider the similarities of our world-pictures, and our imaginative grasp of one another's view-points, thoughts, and feelings. Communication is possible because of this capacity in us and without this natural aptitude for going out of our individual selves and identifying with others, we would have been perfectly dark and intractable to one another, which we are not. Extrapolating from this capacity in us to know others' knowledge and also from the extraordinary powers of some *Yogīs* in this direction, we can reach the conclusion that the self is one eternal cosmic consciousness.

Now that we have, through an analysis of the knowledge situation, known the essential nature of the individual mind or self, known that it is one universal knowing Self revealed as the subject in all knowledge, we can relate it to the cosmic consciousness that speculative reason reaches through its metaphysical enquiries regarding the ground of the world. We have seen that the cosmic consciousness is regarded by speculative reason as the transcendent and unknown (discursively) ground of the world with its every characteristic, particularity, and general laws of recurrence, freedom and necessity, sensations and thought, unifying them through categories. The cosmic consciousness projects or images forth objects freely; it is infinite and eternal and freedom itself. It is also one, for all the objects of the projected world are closely interrelated and point to some single design or purposiveness. If we compare the characteristics, all transcendental, of this cosmic consciousness with those of the consciousness found to underlie the individual minds, then we readily find that the only difference between them is this that while the former actively projects the world of objects, the latter passively knows it to be presented to it. The former therefore knows the world as created by it and, so, as illusory like an object of fantasy or art, while the latter takes it for reality.

And now, since it is the same world that is projected by the cosmic mind and known as real by the universal mind underlying the individual 'minds', the conclusion emerges that the two are essentially the same, only the latter is a deluded mode of the former just as the dream-mind is a deluded mode of the waking one. The cosmic mind shadows forth a world and adopts a realistic view of the world; the knowing mind in the individuals is the creative cosmic mind in this realistic mood.

This identification of the two cosmic minds, one creative and revealed by speculative reason, speculating objectively on the ground of the world, and the other knowing or receiving mind revealed by intuitive reason while inspecting the knowledge situation, is a brilliant idea suggested by the analogy of the situation in dream. The problem is to verify this idea, that is, know it as truth what is so far only plausible. For this a higher form of reason is required. This is *meditative reason*. Through it one has to realize the subject of knowledge as the cosmic mind that creates. In other words, meditative reason should reveal the transcendent ground or creator of the world as residing in the individual mind. This means that through meditation the individual mind should transcend the deluded, realistic and merely knowing mood of the creative cosmic consciousness and should *become* this latter consciousness.

That such a meditation and realization is possible, though we may not ourselves have verified it, is seen from certain activities and confessions of *Yogīs*, prophets, and saints. They have shown extraordinary powers which can only be explained by assuming that the individual mind is essentially the cosmic creative one. Such powers as perceiving others' perceptions and reading others' thoughts and feelings, also perceiving the past and the future and other obscure objects beyond the reach of the senses, reveal the essential universal character of the individual mind. And such powers as working of miracles show the participation of the individual mind in the creative powers of the cosmic mind which creates continuously the world according to its plan. The laws of Nature, being certain rough rules it has framed for itself, do not bind it at all.

In such instances of Yogic powers, the cosmic mind in the individual one is at once manifest, the former reveals itself through its creation as a dramatist does through the character of a soothsayer in his drama whose predictions come true. Thus the chorus in the Greek drama and all divine intervention (*deus ex machina*) and improbable actions or makeshifts in ancient or modern drama produce in the mind of the unbeliever (in supernatural powers and miracles) a sense of artificiality, that is, the feeling that the dramatist's hand is too manifest while it should remain concealed. This mars the dramatic illusion or the semblance of truth (for them) that drama seeks to produce. The same happens in Nature when the non-believer comes across anything supernormal or miraculous. He has to think of this natural world as shot through by some supernatural power or a free creator and this disturbs his faith in the ultimate reality of the hard and fast law-bound world. Minds too much bound to discursive reason and opaque to supernatural being are very much astonished by miracles, while those who have a simple faith in the supernatural take miracles easily. For the latter the world is more or less like a dream or a phantasy. These minds are maturer. The children take dramatic performances more realistically than their elders. Belief in miracles is said to be a sign of a weak mind. The truth is just the reverse of it. The disbelievers over-simplify the world because they cannot comprehend the wider implications of miracles. 'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy'. Horatio's philosophy is a narrow, over-simple view of the world, a cut and dry mechanomorphic one and Hamlet knows its limitations.

So the creative cosmic mind is the essence of the individual mind: it is the higher Self of the individual self. This higher Self may be called the Lord of the world (including the lower self which is a self-imposed deluded mode of it), its creator, sustainer, and destroyer, an omnipotent and omniscient Lord. He is transcendent, for, space, time, causality, matter, etc. are all His creation and the creator must transcend His creation. He is, therefore, infinite, eternal, uncaused, and immaterial. He creates out of a sense of abundance and play *(līlā)*, for He has no want or attachment for anything in particular (everything being unreal to him) and He enjoys His creation in an aesthetic mood. He is therefore full of bliss and beatitude. And then, since He is in every individual, enjoying His play in and through us, He is not far from us, but is our very own, residing in every heart and knowing everything that passes our mind *(antaryāmī)*.

Thus we can regard the cosmic consciousness in an objective manner and in the form of a person. He is a person so far as He is a unity of consciousness as evident from the systematic unity of the world projected by Him. But He is not a human person though He may sometimes adopt the form of a human person and human beings may attain Him (as in the case of *avatāras* and *jīvanmuktas*). The cosmic person enjoys the world as a phantasy while human beings suffer it, taking it for reality. So He does not feel for our sufferings and joys in the same way as we feel and does not seek to relieve our suffferings or enhance our joys in the human way. He has His own plan of the world-drama which has been enacted in the 'eternal now' and which unfolds before us in time. He has His own plan and plot and His own rough rules of consistency, law of *Karma*, and poetic justice. He is thus transcendent and inscrutable. He is certainly not inhuman for He has been found to relieve our sufferings and to set aside all His natural laws to help even a little creature in difficulty. His grace is infinite. Yet He is not humane, He witnesses calmly the sufferings of the world. 'Strange are the ways of God'. And even when He appears to help us or respond to our prayers, He is not humane in these acts, for He creates the situation and manages it. He punishes wrongdoers when necessary and He relieves devotees of their suffering. He moves us to worship and then responds; He prompts all human actions and dispenses justice. Everything is pre-planned and so we cannot judge Him in a human manner. Yet to worship Him is not profitless, for thus we can slowly get over our narrow egoism and move towards realizing Him who is real bliss and beatitude. All the ways of approaching Him are but willed by Him. It is His inscrutable Will that rules everything, from the fall of a leaf to the birth of a star. God Himself puts devotion in the heart of man and draws him unto Himself, giving him good company of saintly persons and good literature to read. He is the *Guru* (Master) who leads us to our salvation.

Now, if this is the nature of God, certain difficulties arise :

(i) If everything is predetermined, then there is no discretionary power in God and we need not pray to Him for anything.

Solution: When we have this true knowledge of the nature of God and the world, we have also become one with Him and then we will have nothing to pray for, there being then no worldly attachment in us, just as a witness of a drama, even an actor, does not pray for anything to happen otherwise than what the dramatist has planned. His enjoyment of the drama is a far greater pleasure than any particular thing that he might be wanting to happen when he takes a realistic or attached view of the affair. If this knowledge of God's nature is merely verbal, then one will pray for worldly things and one may or may not get them, depending on the will of God or the plan of the world-drama. We have no real freedom in these matters.

(ii) If we have no real freedom we are not responsible for our sins.

Solution : If we have realized this truly, we have realized God and so are free like Him and therefore we are then as much responsible for our sins as a villain-actor in a drama is for his villainy. We will then have no attachment to action and our actions will not be *our* actions but God's. But so long as we have not realized Him we are human and have attachment and sense of freedom, and so, of responsibility; therefore, we must be governed by the human moral laws which are but God's Will. Rāvaṇa acted his wicked part in perfect detachment, knowing that he was but following God's Will and so he got salvation. Lord Kṛṣṇa asked Arjuna to fight and kill his relatives in a detached spirit.

(iii) If God has planned all this human history, He is responsible for human sins.

Solution : He is as much responsible for them, as a dramatist for the sins of his villains. We are responsible for them so long as we do not realize Him and ourselves as actors in His drama. The difficulty arises only when we have a mere verbal knowledge of Him.

(iv.) Is there no use of one's being virtuous then?

Reply : God has created everything, the virtuous as well as its opposite. He has arranged for the virtuous greater Self-knowledge and peace (though not necessarily worldly goods) which are the fruits of detachment. We cannot go against His Will so long as we are human; and when we have realized Him we will not go against His Will. God is kind in this that He has given us freedom to be virtuous and get peace; and if we realize that this freedom is apparent only, then we realize God and enjoy the world in an aesthetic manner like Him. Thus the world is in every way a wise creation of God who is just and kind.

(v) God is not free if everything is predetermined.

Solution : God has created the world in a vision in the eternal now after His own sweet will and the question of changing any part of it does not arise for He has *perfectly* planned the whole. Any subsequent change means imperfection in the previous plan and lack of foresight or true vision. God has Himself created the situations where man wants change from his own narrow point of view and He Himself has created in man these desires for change and for his prayers and offerings for it. And He has already planned for the changes wherever they occur. The Whole cosmic drama that unrolls before us in time is a finished thing for Him who is in the 'eternal now'. The miracles and granting of prayers are all predetermined so that a Yogī with a prophetic vision can tell us everything beforehand.

Now one question remains : God, who thus enjoys the world, both inanimate and animate Nature, is in perfect aesthetic detachment, and is full of bliss and beatitude. Yet, He has differentiation. His unity with the self is a synthetic or mediated one, that is, it is a unity in diversity, there being His Self on the one hand and the world of objects on the other against which He shines and on which He depends for His self-consciousness. But this self-consciousness, this 'I'-sense, which requires a 'you' or the other, is not a necessity for Him. We cannot say that the subject we are aware of through our intuitive reason is a correlate of the objects just as a father is a correlate of the son. For, the first pair is not given in the same manner as the second pair. We have father and son, both as objects, while the subject is never an object; and the incident of our *marking* it through an analysis of knowledge, and therefore through objects of knowledge, does not prove that objects are necessary for its existence. In fact, self-consciousness is a mediated unity and depends on objects. But there may be Pure Consciousness, an analytical or undifferentiated unity, without any sense of 'I' and 'you', subjectivity and objectivity. This is the 'subject-object'less consciousness, the Absolute, the Brahman. Man has as his ultimate goal this Brahman, for this is the ultimate reality and this gives complete peace that passeth understanding, real *mokṣa* or *nirvāṇa*. Realizing the Godhead, he forsakes it to realize Brahman. Godhead realized while still living in the world is like becoming aware in a dream of the dream as such and enjoying it as play or spectacle. The individual self is then *in* the world, yet not *of* it. This is the state of liberation in life (*jīvanmukti*). When such an individual dies in body and (egotistic) mind, abandoning all attachment for them (the *manas, buddhi, ahaṃkāra,* and the *indriyas*) he realizes Brahman and is not born again. Then he attains perfect quietus. This liberation after death (*videhamukti*) may be conceived of as analogous to that which the dream-self realizes after the dream is broken and quite forgotten. While meditative reason reveals the creative cosmic consciousness or God as one's own Self, only transcension of all reasoning in some trance-like illumination (*samādhi*) can reveal Brahman, though speculative reason can point to it as we have done here.

Thus God is the higher Self in us that has dreamt a world of space, time, causality and the law of *Karma* which is unreal compared to the reality of this higher Self. Regarded in an objective manner, so long as this Self is not realized as *our* Self, it is a transcendent God whose Will is inscrutable and whose Grace is infinite and we must have total submission to Him. He is above our human standards which are but His creations and our salvation lies in realizing His true nature and attaining His state. This is possible, for He is but an objectified aspect of our real Self that immanently operates through us and becomes self-conscious through any one of us whenever it so pleases Him. He is in us and draws us towards Him. All the paths by which man approaches God are His. Realizing Him man realizes His bliss and beatitude that is the accompaniment of a detached enjoyment of the world known as created for such enjoyment. But even this is a half-way house for the spirit of man that seeks that which is its ultimate nature, a state of being without any differentiation and so a state of total peace, not one wrung out of discord. This is the state of Brahman.

Brahman : An Epistemological Approach 4

When I have doubt with respect to my perception of an object I generally resolve this by a recourse to some criterion of truth. I take that object to be true which is not cancelled by another, which is confirmed by others and which coheres with its surrounding objects. Thus my perception of a fire over there is true if it is not sublated by another percept (as an illusory snake is something sublated by a rope), if others also perceive it to be a fire and if on approaching the place I find warmth, ashes and smoke. In fact we commonly *mean* by truth of a perception these three characters of the latter, viz, non-cancellation by another percept, its coherence with other percepts and its being confirmed by others. Some add a pragmatic meaning of truth holding that what succeeds in practice is true, but this is included in coherence, for a percept, say of a fire, works in practice if it produces the effects—heat, light, expansion, etc., as expected of it. But so far as success or failure of an object in our practical life depends on other factors than the true cognition of it this meaning of truth is not adequate. A gun may not kill one's enemies, not because one has mistaken something else for a gun but because of many other factors. However, the three characteristics mentioned above define for us the meaning and criterion of truth. We say we will not call anything true if it cannot be tested by these three means. But now it appears that we have in our mind a more profound meaning of truth not covered by this definition. This meaning may be brought out by a meditative search into our consciousness. The search will take this line of self-questioning.

Should my initial doubt regarding some perception really be settled by tests we have mentioned above? Perhaps not. For what is the guarantee that what is not so far sublated will not be so sublated, that others are not suffering from the same illusion as I am, and that the whole set of coherent percepts is but a piece of illusion, like a dream, not coherent with a world which may be waiting for us? This means, of course, that if this persent percept is to prove false so must the whole perceptual world which appears to support it and which we have taken for truth. And then the commonsensical usage of the word 'false' will lose its meaning, for something is taken to be false if it is sublated by a particular perceived object (which is then taken to be true) and if it does not fit with other objects taken by all to be true. Since what is here imagined to falsify the particular object that has passed the ordinary tests of truth is not itself given to perception and known for truth, it cannot be entertained as a falsifier in the same sense as the perception of the waking world is done with respect to the dream world or that of a rope with respect to the illusory snake. So the commonsensical person or the analytical philosopher will object to our doubting the verity of the object that has passed the usual tests of truth. He will declare our doubt to be idle and nonsensical. We quite appreciate his position. But ours is precisely that sort of research which seeks to bring out certain meanings of truth and falsity that we believe lie a little deep in our mind. And these may be manifested if we ask such searching questions as appear to be *prima facie* nonsensical. In fact our purpose is precisely to bring about a semantic dislocation and a confusion in the beginning like those that the mystics used to do with their paradoxes like, 'He who saves his life loses it', 'One has to die to live', 'God is nowhere but everywhere', 'The self is neither known nor unknown'. The object is to shock the mind out of the ordinary usage of the words so that the mind may be prepared to recognise certain deeper meanings underlying and beyond the ordinary ones. These latter meanings, be it noted, are not invented by the mystics but discovered; they are in the common consciousness of man, though in an implicit manner, so that when they are roused or revived in him, he recognises or identifies them. It is like one's forgetting some name or a person which one may not readily recall but can recognize if suggested or presented before him.

Thus by means of the above-mentioned paradoxes the mystics sought to rouse in the minds of their disciples the ideas of the soul as contradistinguished from the mundane life, of non-spatial God, and of the subjective self that is not an object for knowledge yet of which we have an immediate awareness.

What we intend here to say is that there is a meaning of truth of a percept other than what we usually are aware of and which meaning may be recovered if we ask such questions as we have done here with respect to the ordinary meaning of truth. This will be a genuine research while the logical analysis of ordinary meaning, though not without its value for clear-thinking and philosophy, is more or less like a disinfectant that keeps us from much harm, from errors and confusions but which also prevents some of our higher notions implicit in us from maturing and budding. The logical analysts of our day who swear by 'common usage' and 'the verificatory theory of meaning', do render good service to us, for clarity is desirable in any discipline. What they sould remember, however, is that clarity is not all, nor is it a positive virtue, and one should not sacrifice new materials of knowledge at the altar of clarity. For it is knowledge that should be clear and distinct and if we restrict knowledge, because as it grows it invites the risk of error and confusion, then it would be like restricting the discovery of new and complex remedies for diseases out of fear that we might make mistakes in discovering and using them. It was Rumi, the Persian mystic, who said, 'Sell your cleverness and buy bewilderment'. So that in a sense an unclear experience of some higher meaning is better than a clear knowledge of the ordinary one. But the lack of clarity that characterizes a first awareness of such higher meanings, as of truth, beauty and goodness, God, soul and eternity, disappears with meditation when the implicit becomes quite explicit. So that, as the mystics affirm, one can grasp the deeper meaning of truth suggested here as clearly as one pleases.

But that means one can realize a position from where the whole world given to human perception appears to be false just as the dream from the standpoint of waking reality. To know this greater meaning of truth is therefore to become a different person. One's human existence undergoes a radical change as one knows this meaning. Here, therefore, knowledge is transforming one's being and not neutral to it. All knowledge, in fact, has this self-referential and self-transforming character. For one's knowing, besides one's doing, is a character of one's self. To know is to know but what one is, one's self, and to do is to manifest this self. But while mere addition of items of empirical knowledge, such as the common objects of the world, merely extends the horizon of the self in one dimension, such knowledge as that of truth, beauty or goodness, opens up new dimensions of this self as this knowledge refers to all objects in the former dimension and places them with reference to this newly realized plane of being. To know anything ultimately is to relate it to the ultimate centre or core of being, and our knowledge, therefore, seeks this latter centre, the absolute source and ground of things. To realize the latter point is to know all things in their proper position as they are in truth or reality. So long as we are short of this supreme realization we give values to objects of our experience which are only relatively true. Thus it is that at one stage of our mental culture we take the sensuously satisfactory for beauty, the biologically useful for good, and the coherent, so far uncancelled by anything else and socially accepted, for truth. These are only relatively beautiful, good and true respectively and we can know their relative characters and, so , the true meanings of the valuational terms—against which meanings these ordinary ones appear relative— only when we realize the absolute pivotal point in our self.

But what is that and how do we arrive at it? Briefly, it must be our pure consciousness which is above subject-object differentiation, for all else would appear to be questionable save this which is the ground of all questions, doubt, negation and affirmation. To arrive at this absolute one has to follow the same method of self-searching as we have illustrated here. The meaning of such a word as truth, which is commonly used in a certain practically helpful sense, if fathomed, would reveal surprising depth and richness. What is more wonderful to think is that all this profund meaning has been lying in the dark ocean of our self waiting for the self itself to probe and recognize it. Now the self finds at one stage of its self-enquiry that truth is a self-conscious state that regards the empirical world as an appearance, as an object of imagination appears to one consciously projecting it. Knowledge of this state to be true yields the correlative of the imaginary as such. This self-consciousness is universal, not individual, it is God's mind. When one has such a state of mind, one is a *jīvanmukta,* one who has attained liberation even while living. One then lives by way of a play, interested only in the play-aspect of one's life and the world, otherwise quite disinterested as one is ordinarily with respect to one's creatures of imagination, including one's own self as imagined to inhabit along with others that imaginary world. One pictures oneself amongst these creatures of imagination mixing with them and suffering like them the joys and sorrows of life. But one always keeps a disinterested contemplative attitude towards all these creatures including oneself as one of them. This attitude is what characterizes aesthetic enjoyment. Short of this *jīvanmukta* state of realization one retains in various degrees genuine interests and a sense of reality with respect to the objects and people of this world including one's own individual and worldly self. The saints and mystics of the world that we know of have exemplified through their behaviour and affirmations these different degrees of detachment from the world. Such of their super-normal powers as of thought-reading, fore-telling, mass-hypnotism and performance of miracles, can be explained by supposing that to them the world and other minds appeared more or less like their own imagination, this depending on their degree of realization of the foundational self-consciousness. We do not know much of an actual but perfect *jīvanmukta* for he would not bother to display his powers to his fellow beings and, so, to spoil his own sport. He would rather live amongst the creatures of his imagination, outwardly like one of the latter but inwardly enjoying their joys and sorrows, as one does amongst those of one's fantasy. One does not picture oneself in the fantasy as revealing to the creatures of that world one's true self. This will spoil the play which requires a dual personality on the part of the player— one that fancies and another that is a part of the fancied world; one that creates, owns and actively and aesthetically enjoys the world, including one's own joys and sorrows suffered in imagination like those suffered by other creatures of his imagination, and another that thus suffers more or less blindly and passively. Thus the *jīvanmukta* lives at once on two planes of being, one creative and contemplative and another creaturely and suffering, one of doing and another of undergoing. The saints and prophets who work for the liberation of others fall short of this perfect *jīvanmukta* state so far as they take the bondage and suffering of their fellow-beings for reality and suffer for their sake. In this they undergo sentiments and become passive instruments of God, who realizes through them the particular aesthetic delight in the sentiment associated with loving and awakening others. But it might as well be that some of these saints and prophets, at least for sometime during their life, had the same realization as that of God, that is, they were aware of their being instruments of awakening of the creatures of imagination. This means they deliberately sought to dissolve the play as this gave them a peculiar delight. There is a delight in the play of imagination as well as one in breaking up the play. A prophet or a saint, then, who knowing himself to be but the universal consciousness and creator of all the world of appearance, of material things and individual minds, yet seeks to awaken these minds to the truth, virtually seeks to break up the play. He is then a *jīvanmukta* who takes this indirect way of retracting his dream-world. He could as well directly awaken his creatures or simply cease imagining them. But so far as he does not do it directly he is still attached to the play, so that he breaks up the play in the manner of a play. Such direct awakening of persons by a saint has been noticed in the case of Vivekananda and others who got their sudden illumination from Sri Ramakrishna. The literature of Zen Buddhism contains records of such occurrences when some chance word or a mere touch of the Zen master produced sudden illumination *(Sartori)* in the disciple.

Now the perfect *jīvanmukta* is God *(Īśvara)* Himself in a human form. When his body dies, the *jīvanmukta* merges in God or the universal self-consciousness that creates the world and individuals for

His objects to beguile Himself. He, like the *jīvanmukta* which He is, identifies Himself with the beings of His own imaginative creation and actively enjoys their joys and sorrows and all the feelings and sentiments, as the dramatist does those of his own characters. This world of material objects and individual beings is the result of His *māyā* and He is the supreme artist. *Raso vai saḥ,* 'He is aesthetic delight himself', says the Upaniṣad. But is this state of *Īśvara* ultimate truth or reality? No. For the sport *(līlā)* appears non-necessary and wearisome for Him when He abandons it and relapses into His original self. He delights in both self-manifestation and self-recollection, both self-differentiation into subject and object and self-identification as the bare or Pure Consciousness. He is God or *Īśvara* in the former attitude or mood and Brahman in the latter. As Brahman, then, He has no object before Him and so He is no subject. Brahman, then, is Pure Consciousness referred to as the Impersonal Being. This is the reality behind all the apparent objects, the One underlying the many, the mother-core of this shell of the universe of mind and matter, the hub of the wheel of existence. This is truth as it is in itself. As we reach it we strike the bottom of the meaning of the word 'Truth'. This is in us all along, beckoning us to dive deep into ourselves for it. Because of it we cannot for long rest contented with any meaning of truth short of this ultimate one. We ask and ask and pass beyond the relative and the provisional truths declaring them, 'Not this, not this' *(neti, neti)* till we reach the final truth when all questions are silenced into a perfect quiescence, all doubts dissolved into a final affirmation. Truth manifests Itself to Itself. There is nothing but the self-shining Pure Self enjoying its sole being without any thought of anything else, so without any division within it of subjectivity and objectivity. This is *Brahman.*

The Concept of *Māyā*

5

Māyā is the pivotal concept in Vedānta metaphysics which declares the external world and the individual self to be illusory from an ultimate standpoint. A proper understanding of *māyā* is indispensable for an intellectual conviction of the truth of Vedānta, which conviction (in this rationalistic age) is a necessary prelude to spiritual faith and culture. We have presented here a kind of psychological approach to the concept of *Māyā*.

Māyā generally means illusion and specifically it stands for the hypothetical illusion of the Supreme Being resulting in the world of change and multiplicity on the one hand and the individual self (ego) on the other for which this world is empirically real. We propose to understand the specific meaning of *māyā* through its general meaning that is to say, we will approach the cosmic concept of *māyā* through its analogues in empirical psychology. We have experience of illusion in our daily perceptive errors, dreams, hallucinations and aesthetic illusions. An analysis of these will reveal an underlying characteristic of our empirical consciousness. And then, on the hypothesis that the empirical consciousness is but a grade or moment in the absolute consciousness, we will posit the same characteristic in the latter, with the result that *māyā* in its specific sense may be understandable on the analogy of its general and familiar sense. Only thus can any metaphysical concept be understood intellectually. Whitehead and other modern philosophers have recognized (the former in a good sense while the latter in a disparaging one) the metaphorical character of all metaphysics. Vedānta has fully explicated this methodological paradox by asserting that the metaphysical is essentially indescribable for all that we predicate to it are taken from our empirical knowledge (experience). Rational philosophy can describe it only by negatives (*neti, neti*), but can *suggest* its character through such terms as *saççidānanda* (being, consciousness, bliss), *nitya, śuddha, buddha, mukta, ānandasvarūpa* (eternal, pure, conscious, free, bliss), these terms being strictly speaking, concepts of restricted meaning, applying only to ordinary experience. As the modern physico-mathematicians have clearly shown, and the logical positivists have amply stressed, the concepts of infinity and eternity have clear and restricted empirical or operational meanings. Similarly each scientific concept, whether of physics, chemistry or psychology, such as mass, energy, affinity, association, love, etc., has to be well defined in terms of observable data which each unifies and stands for so that no empirical concept can have a transcendental reference in sensible discourse. It can only suggest a transcendental meaning in poetry through analogy. The recognition of this is quite a healthy development in modern philosophy and Vedānta would welcome it. Only Vedānta will point out that these suggested or transcendental meanings, though without clear sense in any rational discourse, are not pure nonsense for that reason. They signify the point of departure for a metapsychological experience which alone can vouch for the entities remotely hinted at by the empirical concepts and categories used in a metaphysical context. The possibility of such a metapsychological experience is, of course, an open question, but it is a fact that mystics of all lands and times have unequivocally proclaimed this possibility, realizing the transcendental experience as an actuality. So, in a rational discussion such as this, we have to accept a metapsychological concept (viz. *Māyā* as an illusion in the Supreme Being) *first* as a transcendental hypothesis to be understood on the analogy of a general empirical concept by extending its sense beyond the operational limits, and *secondly* as a possible entity relying, guided by reason itself, on the verdict of so many mystics. For the mystics have been very sensible and human; they were not irrational but super-rational, having developed a superintellectual faculty over and above, and not at the cost of the intellectual.

This much regarding our philosophical method which is rational and analytical though frankly speculative in the last analysis. Let us now start with a simple perceptive error such as a mirage. We apparently see a stretch of water before us and reflection of trees in it, yet we find there is no water. How is it? —we ask. We find that the illusion is due to our habit of locating an object in front of us from which rays of light normally come straight to our eyes. In the case of a mirage the rays of light get refracted and totally bent in the reverse direction while passing through the layers of air heated to different temperatures and so rarified in different degrees. Now rays from the bare land at a distance are bent upwards and do not enter our eyes in the same direction as rays from the land at some distance normally do meet the eyes. Thus, instead of the land, we see—following the direction of the rays straightforward and not being conscious of any bending—the bluish horizon stretched before us. And this appears as water for two reasons. First, as blue water stretching horizontally on level with the land is a familiar sight while the sky spreading on land is unfamiliar, the mind operates through past learning. Secondly, the rays from distant trees (and other raised objects, if any) get so bent that by the same optical law they produce inverted images on the other side just as they would porduce had there been water which reflects light. The eye is used to locate water when it sees objects with their inverted images. Thus the psychological reason of mirage is that the psychic apparatus works mechanically after its previously learned habits and tendencies. When the illusion is corrected the perceiver is conscious of the illusory objectivity of the presentation, that is, of its subjectivity. His attention is turned from the object to the subject and he holds the presentation no longer seriously as something really given but holds it lightly with amused curiosity as a creation of his own psychic apparatus. The ordinary images we see in a plane mirror or water do not produce on us the same illusory effect as they do on children and animals, for we are conscious, through familiarity, of the illusory objectivity. Thus though the reflected object is seen to be out there, we no longer believe in it and ascribe it to our psychic apparatus. We note in passing that what is objectively given engages our serious attention and what is known as arising from our own mind does not trouble us so much.

Consider next the illusion of a snake in a rope. Here what is presented is a general and faint outline (or schema) of a rope which is the same as that of a snake. The details of the rope are not seen at the first glance, specially when there is insufficient light or defect in the eye. Now, why does one, seeing the bare outline of a rope apparently see a snake and not merely the outline? The reason is plain. One who has seen snakes in the past and is afraid of them has the thought and (generic) image of a snake latent in his mind in a more vivid and ready form than he has the thought and image of a rope. So he *imposes* this thought and image of a snake on the bare outline and completes the picture. The illusory perception, when corrected, shows the perceiver how his psychic machinery with its previously learned habits of working contributes largely to the formation of a percept. A familiar percept at the first glance is, as a rule, an interpreted one. If the latter is confirmed by subsequent complete observation it is a true percept, if not, it is an illusion. That the dominant tendencies and set habits of the mind are responsible for such illusions is further seen from such familiar illusions as reading a more desirable or familiar word into a combination of letters making a slightly different word. Thus one may read grape for gripe, pursue for peruse. The superimposition of past experience on the present is a characteristic function of our mind.

In hallucinations and dreams the mind is more active in creation. Here the mind projects its past experience (thoughts, emotions and images) on apparently no present experience. The mind may start projecting from a slight stimulus, but it proceeds to call up, combine and marshall thoughts, emotions, and vivid images like a conjurer. In fantasy-thinking or day-dreaming a similar process, though in a less vivid form, occurs. Such phenomena have been largely explained in terms of the inner tendencies in a person's mind. These tendencies which have been more or less thwarted in actual life, repressed and somewhat distorted, are purged in dreams, hallucinations and fantasies. These tendencies have their common root in love of pleasure and are, more specifically, either erotic (according to Freud) or self-assertive (Adler) or both(Jung). The affective part of the mind is held to be the prime mover in such psychic phenomena, the thoughts and images follow according to laws of association. Certain images are associated with certain emotions and so have emotional significance for the subject. Some emotions have been found to be almost universally associated with certain images (dream-symbols) while there are also many individual associations for individual persons. However, the psychoanalysts have amply revealed the inner mechanism of dreams and hallucinations. And they have also shown that by making a person conscious of his inner repressed tendencies (discovered through analysis of dreams etc. and childhood memories) he can be freed from certain neurotic symptoms which appear when these tendencies too much dominate his mental life. Thus we find, again, that our consciousness can project presentations, stored previously, which, so long as they appear as objective, engage our serious attention, but we dismiss them as soon as their objectivity is seen to be illusory, their subjective origin being exposed to us.

Next we consider aesthetic illusion. Here we relish even painful scenes because we are always conscious of the illusory objectivity of the presentation; we, so to say, enjoy our power to project emotions and enjoy them disinterestedly as generic ideal contents with no particular attachment to anybody—me, the actor, or the character. The secret of aesthetic delight (*rasa*) is that an emotion is here deindividuated and leads a floating and illusorily objective life. I suffer the emotion of sadness when I am really sad, but I enjoy the emotion when sadness is depicted in art and I am sad with the suffering character. In case of the illusion of a snake in a rope our thought, fear and image of a snake are superimposed upon an outline of a rope which is like that of a snake. In art our certain more or less permanent generic tendencies (*sthāyībhāvas*) are superimposed upon certain situations, gestures and words which are said to suggest these tendencies. The modern theory of empathy speaks of this process as constitutive of the aesthetic attitude. The difference between perceptive illusion and artistic one is that while in the former we are not conscious of the illusion as an illusion for a time, in the latter we are so conscious. Therefore arises the peculiar taste of aesthetic delight.

In the above psychical phenomena we find that the objectivity appears because something have previously been really objective. Therefore the mind is used to work in a characteristic manner and to view an object as the 'other', so that though a particular object may be found to be subjective, objectivity itself remains a valid category. As Śaṅkara has urged against the subjective idealists (who said that the external world only appears to be objective), there must be something objective in order that objects may *appear* as objective. Again, the objectivity of a snake in a rope, of a mirage etc., when retracted, do not cancel all objectivity; rather, the objectivity of the empirical space-time world is the common background (or matrix) of such illusory objects which are marked as illusory when compared to this background. The criterion of objectivity is supplied by the empirical world that confronts and engages our spirit like a rock, the great 'other' that cannot be either derived from or appropriated by the subject. A short respite from it is got in dreamless sleep. In art we seem to dodge it, as the art-world is enjoyed consciously as a dream-world of our own making. Yet the dodge is not complete, only the objective world is not pressing enough, but remains as a mild background, helping the art-objects (by contrast) to appear as subjective (our making). Besides, the objective attitude is there in a make-believe form. In art there is a peculiar fusion of the subjective and objective attitudes. In other illusory phenomena, a particular illusion gives way only to the more pervasive sense of objectivity of the empirical world.

However, while granting that objectivity remains a valid category in our empirical psychic phenomena, we have to admit two characteristics of our mind : first, that it can project images (charged with emotive meanings) which appear as objective; secondly, that it regards these projected images with amused curiosity and delight when their objectivity is found to be but illusory. The illusory objectivity reveals to the mind its capacity for creation and retraction as fully illustrated by aesthetic experience.

Metaphysical speculation starts with the question whether it is possible, on the analogy of our empirical illusions, to consider the empirical world itself as a result of a projection by us, and whether, therefore, a realization of the objectivity of the world as illusory is attended by a kind of aesthetic delight. Such a question is not born of an idle desire to push an analogy to a higher level but of a real problem in psychology as well as in epistemology. We feel at times that the objective world, though full of beauty and variety, rather weighs upon us because it always confronts our spirit as the 'other' and engages our attention. It holds us by a strong hand, so to say, and we seek to escape it in our sleep, art and esoteric contemplation with but limited success.We seem to be bi-polar in our attitude to the objective world : We want it as a companion to turn to and commune with, and we also want it to let us alone. Can this be due to some deeper metapsychological reasons? Epistemologically, again, the problem arises, how can we at all know anything that is independent of our mind? To solve these problems we have to assail the problem of objectivity of the empirical world, and to solve the latter, we may find its empirical analogue, the phenomenon of illusory objectivity, helpful. So we consider the possibility of our regarding the objectivity of the empirical world as a projection of ours and so, retractable.

To imagine the objectivity of the world as projection we have to imagine the projecting mind. In empirical illusions, the projecting mind is the individual one, but, in a transcendental illusion (*māyā*) we are considering, the projecting mind must be some universal one, for the projected world is independent of the individual mind. Yet the individual mind perceives the world, and *our* original question is whether *we* (i.e. any one of us) can consider it as our creation. So the universal mind must be regarded as immanent in the individual mind, or as a mental continuum pervading the collective mind of man. The individual mind may attain or realize this universal mind by shaking off its individual peculiarities and egotistic limitations. Such must be the concept of our hypothetical universal mind projecting the empirical world.

The next point we have to consider is this : In empirical illusions, the material cause of projection is provided by certain tendencies in the empirical mind while the teleological cause (or motive) is provided by a love of play or a display of the power of creation. (This is mostly seen in aesthetic illusion; in lower forms the motive seems to be simple purgation). This creation involves projection and retraction at once for the objectivity of what is projected is also known as illusory. Now what would be the tendencies in the universal mind and what is its motive? Analogically we would answer that its motive may be considered to be aesthetic and its tendencies (i.e. sentiments) may be such as we vaguely experience when we adopt an aesthetic attitude to the world. In that attitude we take a disinterested veiw of things in the sense that we do not take any of these views—pragmatic, realistic, moral or scientific. We only enjoy the particular aesthetic sentiments (*rasas*) suggested by the things. These sentiments do not bind us to the objects, they are universal ideal contents and belong to no object or person in particular. In this aesthetic attitude we treat nature as an art-object and its objectivity appears illusory. Keats writes of a street-fight in this mood thus : 'Though a quarrel in the streets is a thing to be hated, the energies displayed in it are fine : the commonest man shows a grace in his quarrel. By a superior being our reasonings may take the same tone—though erroneous they may be fine. This is the very thing in which consists poetry...'

Thus we see that we have no difficulty in conceiving (i) a higher universal mind as the subject projecting this empirical world this mind being immanent in our individual mind, and (ii) its tendencies and motives behind this projection. But with respect to the second, one thing has to be noted. The tendencies explaining our empirical illusions are ascribed to our past experience whereas no such ascription is possible in case of transcendental illusion (*māyā*), for it would lead to infinite regress. Again the objectivity of empirical illusions appears as illusory because of the objectivity of the empirical world. No such prior or basic objectivity can be found for the illusoriness of the empirical world. Thus the analogy between the empirical and transcendental illusions cannot be worked in every detail. But this is no defect in our speculative method, rather it is a merit. For, had our analogy worked in every detail, we would but end in duplicating the empirical illusion and its elements on a higher level with the consequence that we would have to explain that in terms of analogous principles of a third order. This would land us in an infinite regress. We escape that predicament by admitting that (i) the universal mind possesses originally certain aesthetic sentiments with their appropriate images to represent them, and (ii) it can project these images to enjoy the sentiments and generally to enjoy the game of projection.

With the help of our analysis of empirical illusions and working up from it analogically till the analogy breaks at a few points (and we have to make certain assumptions) we find that we can have a conception of a universal mind projecting this empirical world which is thus illusory for this mind. And as this higher mind is but immanent in our individual one we can rise up to it, and identifying ourselves with it, view this world as illusory and enjoy it as a piece of art.

Since this conception is not self-contradictory, it is a logical possibility. Whether it is an actuality is a matter of transcendental experience and falls beyond speculative philosophy which ends with establishing hypothetical schemes with the minimum of arbitrariness and maximum of suggestibility or empirical analogues.

Now our conception of this universal mind projecting the world is equivalent to that of Īśvara of Vedānta who is known as *Māyādhīśa*, the lord of *māyā*. But we can go a step further in our speculative venture and conceive of a Being who, when the world is known as *māyā*, dismisses it quietly and relapses into its primitive mood in which there are neither tendencies nor thought of projection. This is the Brahman who has no reference to *māyā*, just as a poet or a dreamer may normally be regarded without reference to his poems or dreams which are accidents of his nature. So *māyā* need not be held as an essential character of the ultimate Reality which is the One without a second and without any qualification as the Upaniṣads declare.

Māyā or Illusoriness of the world is thus reduced to a shadow with no independent status beside Reality. Reality is truth while *māyā* is error. Truth is self-evident and does not require a contradiction (error) to be contradicted (overcome) in order to be established. But error, on the contrary, has no ultimate being, for it disappears as truth gleams, like darkness when light appears. So *māyā*, though it is transcendental illusoriness in contrast to our empirical ones and has a positive being from an empirical standpoint, is a non-entity from an ultimate standpoint. It can be called neither real nor unreal in an absolute sense and, therefore, the Vedānta calls it *indescribable* (*anirvāçya*). This happens because Vedānta recognizes grades of reality and *māya* belongs to a grade lower than the uppermost. Brahman, our highest Self, has no reference to *māya* just as the truth about a rope has no reference to snakes.

Vedānta Phenomenology

6

Awareness as the metaphysical ground

Awareness is the ultimate principle of everything. For there can be nothing mentionable of which we are not aware. Any material principle such as space-time, wave-motion or energy, cannot be as foundational or ultimate as awareness, for we are aware of matter as constituting the world and we would have questions regarding the origin of matter of which we are aware as an object standing over against the subject that becomes aware of it. The objective pole of awareness, being passive and a part of awareness, cannot cover or explain awareness which is a spiritual activity and a whole including the subjective pole besides the objective one. That is , this awareness must be held as more fundamental than any of its poles which can easily be derived from it. Any mental principle cannot be the ultimate metaphysical principle if it is such an obvious activity as thinking, willing, feeling or sensing. For, then it becomes an object of awareness which is more fundamental. If it is a hypothetical entity such as a universal mental substance or mind, then, besides being uncertain like any hypothesis, it may be regarded either as a subject (like one's own mind) or as an object (like others' minds). In each case it would require, for its positing, awareness with the other pole. The universal subject cannot exist without being aware of a universal object and *vice versa.* Subject and object each presupposes the other and awareness of which they are poles. Moreover, in conceiving some universal objective mind (like the mind of God, conceived as the other) as the foundational principle, there is the further difficulty caused by the impossibility of deriving from it our mind which we experience as a subject and which is a part of reality. For, our mental activities are never felt as impelled by some other mind or Overmind, they appear as free and not externally controlled and they appear as subjective (as peculiarly ours), while the other mind is objective. We do become aware of an Overmind controlling our minds, but then we do not regard this Overmind as the other, rather we identify ourselves with this Overmind and regard it as our own; we, so to say, *become* it, and regard our individual self as an llusory object. So that, in a sense, the objective or the other mind may be derived from subjectivity, as it can be projected as an object by the higher subject (as is illustrated by such phenomena also as dream, illusion and imagination), but subjectivity cannot be so derived from objectivity. Subjectivity is thus more fundamental than objectivity. And, as has been noted before, awareness is more fundamental than both of these which are its two poles presupposing it. Nothing can be asserted of which we are not directly aware and as this awareness is more primitive than its object, it is the ultimate reality. Metaphysics, therefore, must be based on my personal experience and must not be speculative or hypothetical like science. It is the exposition of the self-evident by the self-evident, that is, explication and clarification of what is already there in personal awareness. The task of metaphysics, as phenomenology of Husserl and his followers now recognize, and what Vedānta and Yoga affirmed in the past, is not to tell 'stories' but to search for, discover and state nothing that is not given in our experience in the very form in which they are stated. The ultimate reality is not to be a postulated or inferred something behind the world and beyond all experience, to be but dimly suspected and excitedly talked about, but it must be something given in experience and obtained by analysing performances and functions of consciousness. Of course, here consciousness is not restricted to its *ordinarily* explicit and obvious acts; it includes what are implicit in the obvious acts and what are *made* explicit through self-introspection or pursuing our ordinary experiences back to their origin. Philosophy is thus direct intuition involving discovery of the deeper layers of experience behind the superficial ones. It is a meditative research and revelation, and so far as the absolute realizes itself through 'my' meditations, philosophy cannot eliminate subjectivity. 'In you lies the endless sea, only you have not seen it', sings a Bengali *Bāul.* 'Here likewise, in this body of yours, my son, you do not perceive the True; but there in fact it is. In that which is the subtle essence, all that exists has its self. That is the True, that is the Self, and thou, Śvetaketu, art That' (*Çhāndogya Upaniṣad*). The Truth to be asserted must be 'my' own realization, there is no escape from this position, call it solipsism or singularism, whatever one may.

Now this awareness cannot be questioned in any way. Its origin cannot be an object of enquiry, for we cannot be aware of any state more fundamental than awareness and to think that there may be non-awareness preceding or conditioning awareness is a self-contradictory proposition. Objects of awareness such as the world of things may come out of nothing, for this nothing or non-existence of all objects is itself an object of awareness, but awareness cannot come out of non-awareness, for the latter is never a possible state. It is a meaningless term. Now it may be thought that in deep dreamless sleep we have such non-awareness or absolute nought. But that is untenable. For, how is it that on waking we feel we slept well? We have a memory of the direct awareness of existence of objects as (perceptually or sensuously) unknown during sleep. This direct intuition or awareness is denied by some who argue that there was but absence of sense-objects during sleep, no positive awareness of this absence. But how is this absence known? They say this absence of sense-knowledge is known by inference from the absence of psychical conditions of knowledge, e.g. absence of attention. But this is untenable. For, first, the absence of conditions of knowledge and absence of knowledge of objects (i.e. absence of objects as known) must be known to have universal concomitance between them before the inference can take place, and this is impossible without having a direct awareness of absence of knowledge. In fact, absence of conditions of knowledge is inferred from the absence of knowledge which is directly intuited. If it is said that the absence of conditions of knowledge is not thus inferred, but from the inactivity of the senses during sleep, then it is also incorrect. For, inactivity of the senses is itself inferred from absence of conditions of knowledge which in its turn is inferred from an intuition of the absence of knowledge. To argue that inactivity of the senses is not thus inferred, but from a sense of ease we experience after sleep, is also incorrect, for no causal relation between the two have been experienced and similar sense of ease may be experienced even when the senses are active, as for instance, in a composed state of the mind when there is balance and harmony of the mental activities.

The above incidentally shows that what are known as psychical and physical conditions of awareness are not the productive cause of awareness which is autonomous and self-subsisting and which employs the so-called conditions as means of expression. And there are cases of awareness of sense-objects without the senses being employed. Such extra-sensory perception (E.S.P.) is now an intriguing subject for the psychologists.

To return to our original contention, a condition of non-awareness is meaningless and the experience of deep dreamless sleep cannot provide any meaning to the term. There is awareness of absence of sense-knowledge during deep sleep and not any pure absence of sense-knowledge or pure nought. In death too we cannot conceive of a pure nought to descend, for we can be aware of an absence of all sense-knowledge (of objects), but not of non-awareness. To argue that this non-awareness may be inferred from absence of conditions of knowledge after death is again to fall into fallacies already pointed out.

Thus awareness is the ground of everything and nothing can exist in the universe of things and thought that cannot be placed with reference to awareness. Now the problem is to grade the items of this universe with regard to the manner in which we are aware of them. There are different grades or levels of awareness in order of comprehension and essence. The more comprehensive and essential awareness is implied by the lesser one, to understand which fully we must have the higher order of awareness. Again, the higher order of awareness holds its lower one as a contingent product and modification of the higher which is immanent in the lower, yet which is not wholly immanent, but transcendent also, for how else can the lower be felt as incomplete and eventually lighted up by the higher, seen through, and sublated? The lower is the self-obscuration by the higher of itself, which, as it were, in a spirit of sport forgets itself and projects a world it (in a deluded mood, as a lower self) takes for reality. When this self-forgetfulness is not complete, it views the projected world in a make-believe spirit, enjoying it as the illusory taken deliberately for reality. In any case, this is veiling and distorting one's own real nature. Yet this real nature remains the basis of the illusory world which is never self-complete, ever pointing to the higher which, after its temporary lapse, comes to its own. This game of self-losing and self-restoring, projecting and sublating, in various degrees and in a serial manner, stage by stage, is a characteristic of awareness which, as has been pointed out, throughout the modifications remains in each level transcendent of the lower; then, it only loses self-awareness and works unconsciously from behind (or above) the lower and conscious level which becomes its mode of manifestation and contains in an implicit form the higher awareness. When this becomes explicit, that is, the higher wakes to self-consciousness, the lower appears illusory and vanishes. Hence awareness in itself, the highest level, is already implicit in its lower modes, and only becomes explicit gradually and by stages when they prove illusory and break up, following the silent will of the highest awareness.

The dream-awareness : art and imagination

Now let us briefly examine the various orders of awareness starting from the lowest. This is the dream-awareness (including awareness in illusory perception which is a kind of dream). It is a modification of the wakeful awareness which is presupposed by it and which is present in it in an implicit manner or disguised form. The dream appears to be a continuation of the world of wakeful awareness; there is reference in it of the latter which is taken as real, whereas the wakeful awareness regards the dream as false. Again, the dream-world cannot exist without the wakeful one, whereas the reverse is not true. The wakeful awareness, giving us the empirical world as the object and the wakeful self as the subject, is more comprehensive and essential than the dream-awareness with its dream-world as the object and the dreaming self as subjective counterpart of the latter.

This wakeful awareness is immanent in the dream-awareness in the sense that the latter takes itself to be a continuation of the former which remains the standard of reality, but this wakeful awareness remains transcendent too. For, we are not totally unaware of the wakeful world in our sleep or dream; we wake up at the appointed hour, the mother wakes up as soon as the baby cries, while she sleeps on even if greater noise be about her. There are many other facts of this nature. And then, sooner or later, this higher awareness asserts itself and comes to its own. It is the immediate creator and enjoyer of the dream-awareness that is an offshoot from it. The wakeful awareness, not being satisfied with the variety of the wakeful world that is rather rigid and stereotyped, projects or conjures up another world freer and more flexible, answering to its wishes and desires. To the question why we do have horrid and fearful dreams, the answer is that the wakeful awareness loves these for the mere love of variety and of display of freedom and creative activity. It hungers for experience of all kinds, for variety and intensity of emotions. We express this fact of which we are implicitly aware in our introspective mood, by saying that we *unconsciously* wish and enjoy every experience for its own sake. Since the dream-world is conjured up in order to fulfil emotional satisfaction, it has to be regarded as real while it lasts, for objects known as unreal do not give us as much emotion as those taken as real. But the dream breaks, sometimes due to external physical causes, conditions of sleep being then disturbed, but often due to internal psychical causes. And as modern psychologists have shown, the physical causes breaking sleep and dream, e.g. noise or thirst, are diverted away or moderated by this unconscious dream-mechanism which so interprets these stimuli that they fail to wake us up. Thus we dream of drinking water and then continue sleeping and dreaming other things instead of waking up for real water. The transcendent wakeful awareness that is not wholly self-forgetful and immanent in the dream (to make it appear as the wakeful awareness), thus controls the dream from behind; but it comes to its own after remaining more or less unconscious for a while, watching the dream life, and asserts itself and activates the senses that are its handmaids. Often, even within the dream, we become faintly aware of the wakeful world and, so, aware of the dream-world as a shadow show. We also sometimes have the experience of producing dream-objects out of our own free will; simply through our wishing something to appear, we can make it appear. We then catch ourselves playing the trick of making something appear as objective which is really of our making. However, this world knowingly conjured up loses its grip on us and we soon have to either suppress or withdraw our wakeful awareness (as before sleep) which falls into unconsciousness, or to lose the dream-weaving capacity. The dream vanishes as the wakeful awareness fully asserts itself or manifests itself through determinate sense-knowledge. The dream-awareness appears to the wakeful awareness as a parasite (on the latter), but the reverse cannot be asserted. The dream is nourished by the wakeful awareness and the dream cannot deny this while it poses as the wakeful awareness (though it cannot also assert this); but this latter awareness never takes anything from the dream which it explicitly knows as illusory. This is the reason why the dream-awareness is placed lower in grade to wakeful awareness as explained before.

Imagination and fancy, both natural and artistic, reveal a kind of awareness that is dream-awareness in essence; only, in this case the objects conjured up are not so vivid and real, for the wakeful awareness is not so unself-conscious as in dreams. Here the wakeful awareness is more openly creating and enjoying the imaginary world projected by it, but the faith in the projected world is not as much as in dreams and so the emotional intensity is also poorer. The variety of emotional effects is also comparatively limited for the imaginary world can enjoy less freedom and flexibility than the dream-world. We cannot have in imagination all those weird scenes, figures, and events suggesting strange emotions which we have in dreams, for in dreams our wakeful awareness is much less interfering, being much less self-conscious, than in imagination. An event that appears very improbable in imagination and, so, very little emotionally effective, does not appear the least improbable in a dream, though in dreams too we have faint and dormant awareness of the wakeful world so that outrageously nonsensical objects or situations shock us out of dream. Because, imaginative awareness stands beside the waking awareness which is not so much held in abeyance or kept unconscious as in dream. We are conscious of the imaginary world as such, knowing it as a make-believe one ; we have a detachment with regard to it which is almost absent in the case of the dream-world. This detachment, known technically as psychical distance or aesthetic disinterestedness, is one of the conditions of aesthetic delight which is regarded as impersonal. In the imaginative awareness we have, as Coleridge pointed out, a willing suspension of disbelief, whereas in the dream-awareness we are not conscious of this deliberate activity of the will which, however, works from behind the scenes, being transcendentally operative.

The imaginary world of everyday life and of art is a dreamworld that has lost much of its vividness and freedom for want of that extreme switching off (or pushing behind the scenes) of the wakeful awareness achieved in dream-awareness. Its pattern is the same as the dream-world and like the latter its terms of reference are the wakeful world which is thus immanently present in it. The liberty taken with the wakeful awareness in the creation of the imaginary world is less than in the dream-world, for the wakeful world is now already at the margin of consciousness and the deviations from it do not go unmarked. The memory-world is a step beyond the imaginary one towards the wakeful world, the memory-objects being known as representations of the latter world. Memory-awareness is the awareness of imaginary objects as copies of the real objects. This wakeful reality is thus taken as the rigid standard for this kind of awareness with no scope for liberty in the creation of the memory-images.

In all these three varieties of the awareness of the unreal or shadow worlds, there is a natural delight, noticed particularly in the case of artistic imagination by many aestheticians. This delight is an accompaniment and immediate product of the activity of awareness that conjures up or bodies forth objects tingling with emotions. It is a projection or objectification of emotions in sensuous form. The awareness of the shadow world is at once the experience of various emotions, both pleasurable and painful, and the delight proceeds from the awareness itself, the creative exercise and the objects and experiences creatively enjoyed . Thus every dream is somehow enjoyable and all art, both tragedy and comedy, in fact, imaginative and recollecting activity, irrespective of their pleasure-pain quality, is agreeable. Awareness in any of its grades is, after all, awareness that has willingly modified itself into the lower forms in such a way that partly immanent in a form, it transcends it also and retracts it any moment. This awareness is essentially delightful. It is thus *saççidānanda* (being-awareness-bliss). The more we are explicitly aware of the higher forms of awareness the more will be the sense of creation and participation in the essence of awareness, and so, more will be the delight.

The wakeful awareness and its explanation from a higher awareness

We now proceed to the next higher grade of awareness, the wakeful one. This gives the so-called 'real' world at its objective pole and the wakeful ego at its subjective pole. This awareness is ordinarily taken as the absolute and the world as the real one. So the pleasurable and painful objects appear as absolutely so. Yet this is not wholly true even for ordinary minds. There comes an intuition of the worldly objects with their emotional effects as somehow essentially delightful. The world appears as an imaginative creation, as an aesthetic object. This means some transcendental awareness is caught hold of even in the midst of our worldly awareness and it works from behind the scenes just as the latter does with respect to dream and imagination. A little self-disciplining and philosophical introspection make this higher order awareness more apparent and the wakeful awareness as imaginary. The qualities and the relations, that is, sense-intuitions and the forms that make up the phenomenal world, appear as not necessary or compulsive. An object known implies an awareness of it as existent, but there is also an awareness that the object might not as well exist. Existence implies non-existence, a thing coming out of nothing in a very real sense. Thus it is that nothingness or *śūnyatā* is regarded in Mādhyamika and Zen Buddhism as the source of all things and the basis of spontaneity. 'Everything comes from nothing, seeing from non-seeing, the conscious from the unconscious', says a Zen master. 'All things in the world come from existence and existence comes from non-existence', says Lao-Tsze (Tao Te Ching, XL). 'The sages who searched their hearts' thought discovered the existent's kinship in the non-existent' (*Ṛgveda, Nāsadīya Sūkta*). The relation of logical implication or logical togetherness of things and nothingness is recognized in the Mādhyamika and Zen philosophy, but what is known as *saṃsāra* is the same as *nirvāṇa*. 'The soul as birth and death (*saṃsāra*) comes forth from the Tathāgata's womb. But the immortal (suchness) and the mortal (birth and death) coincide with each other. Though they are not identical they are not a duality. It is called *ālayavijñāna*', writes Aśvaghoṣa in his *Awakening of Faith*.

Now what is important to note is that it is not nothingness that produces things, but *awareness* of nothingness that does so. This removes the apparent self-contradiction from the statement 'Everything comes from nothing', and gives sense to the interpretation of *śūnyatā* (as made by many modern philosophers, e.g. D. T. Suzuki) as something affirmative and not purely nihilistic. Awareness of nothingness produces awareness of things and the latter implies the former. As shown before, pure naught is a meaningless term; there is but awareness of non-existent things. This awareness means awareness of 'objects in general' or pure object without any space-time determination (that is , without existence, existence being always determinate and particular). This awareness implies possibility of objects and, so, is the condition of (*awareness* of) actual objects. When awareness develops polarity and has one object to contemplate as a subject, there is the beginning of creation. Out of pure objectivity come particular objects. We will elucidate this point subsequently.

All this means that the wakeful awareness of the so-called real world is only a kind of dream-awareness and not absolute. Thus the world with its laws and categories is not anything apart from our awareness and this awareness is but a contingent modification of a higher awareness of non-existence and possibility of the world. This view of the world solves a great many puzzles and paradoxes which the schools of rationalism, realism, empirical or subjective idealism and some varieties of absolute idealism generate by not recognizing (what Vedānta phenomenology does) awareness with its different grades as the foundational principle of metaphysics.

Thus it solves the riddle of the origin of the world. There cannot be found any material substance as the prime stuff of the world, for the question of the origin of this stuff has to be faced. Awareness of no-thing (and the *idea* of things it involves) being the cause of everything explains at once the origin of things and their infinite variety. It explains because it convinces us at first through our analogical experience in dreams and imagination (where objects appear out of nothing merely through our willing it), and then through our direct experience of the principle. For the principle is within us all the time: 'That Thou art'. It requires only a little withdrawal of the mind from its naive and habitual objective attitude to the inner regions where the implications of the sense-objects reside. Philosophical enquiry, particularly of the phenomenological research type, illustrated by our Yoga and Vedānta disciplines, leads one to grasp the inner principles and explicates what operates implicitly.

The question of the origin of the world cannot be solved by the realists. Matter *out there* as an ultimate given is never a satisfactory solution. It cannot, for instance, explain our knowledge of it and our error. The empirical idealists, like Berkeley and the Vijñānavādins, rightly reject the material substance, but since they reject the external or public world also, they create many problems without solving them satisfactorily. The external world is self-evidentially given and to reject it in the bald way (without a philosophy of levels of awareness) is very arbitrary and this leads to relativism and scepticism. Vedānta phenomenology recognizes awareness of objects as (perceptually) known and also as unknown and implied by the former awareness and made explicit with a little introspection. Rationalism explains the world from reason, but cannot solve the riddle produced by the dichotomies such as subject-object, substance-qualities, universal-particular, reason-sensation, unless it recognizes levels of awareness. Absolute and dialectical idealism come nearer to our philosophy, but make Being and non-Being or Becoming remote principles behind our experience. That they are already 'in us' waiting to be recognized and made self-aware, has to be perceived and so philosophy is to be a system of serious personal knowledge instead of a speculative theory.

The idea of the world as a sort of dream solves another metaphysical riddle, that connected with the origin of the world in time. If the world is regarded in a realistic and absolutist fashion, it is patent that we are landed in hopeless self-contradictions. If it appeared at a particular time, what was there before its appearance? If it is eternally here, it passes one's understanding in the realistic attitude. The answer is that just as in a dream we can never find out the time when the dream started, so we can never find out the beginning of the world in world-time. This time that we experience is created by the higher awareness for which all the events here are in an eternal now. That which creates time out of its free will cannot itself be temporal. The starting of the dream can be known only in the wakeful awareness and the time of starting can be marked in the world-time, for to mark the starting we have to be aware of the state immediately preceding it. The dream-time is within the world-time and the latter within the timeless now of the awareness of non-existence and possibility. There may, however, be many *scales* of world-time correlated to physical environment and psychological conditions of the person aware of the world, but there are only three *orders* of time, viz. the dream-time, the world-time of wakeful awareness and the timeless now of the awareness of non-existence and possibility. From this examination of orders of time we find that the beginning of the world cannot itself be timed. Aristotle also held this view and he showed that the starting of change cannot be marked; we note a change when it has already taken place. This means that in terms of our own time, the beginning of the world cannot be known to have occurred and, so, the world may be held as beginningless. But it cannot be said to be endless, for the awareness of the world may be transcended any time, in the sense that its necessity or objectivity may appear as illusory in the light of a new awareness, viz. that of non-existence and possibility. Thus it is that Śaṅkara held *māyā* to be beginningless though not endless. And since *māyā* (the wakeful awareness of the world) exists, yet is not inevitable, but like a dream or an illusory object is capable of being cancelled or sublated, that is , since it exists and so is not wholly unreal, yet is not ultimately real, it is said to be indescribable (*anirvaçanīya*). The rather paradoxical statements of Śaṅkara regarding the nature of the world of wakeful awareness may be better understood in the light of levels of awareness as suggested here.

The enigmatic problems of the prime stuff and of the beginning of the world are thus solved by our phenomenological enquiry. The third problem is that of the finitude and infinitude of the world. This may be settled if we recognize that there is no world apart from our awareness of it both as perceived and as not perceived. (I am aware of objects existing though not perceived. This awareness of objects as unperceived is the implication of awareness of objects as perceived. When I perceive an object I am aware of the object as not created by the perceptual activity, but existing independently). The world can be infinitely extended or divisible if this awareness be infinitely extended in time. Since there is always the possibility of this awareness being transcended, the world cannot be said to be infinite; but as within this awareness we can never come to a limit in extension or division of the world, the world is boundless. Thus the paradoxical statement that the world is boundless though not infinite may be made. It may be understood through its analogy with the dream-situation. In a dream we can never come to a limit while exploring the dream-land or while dividing any dream-object, for we shall be always, without our knowing it, producing some object in dream-awareness. Yet the dream-awareness may be transcended and so the apparent infinity of extension or division may prove illusory. The same holds with regard to the world of wakeful awareness; we can never come to an end of the world or of dividing a body, but we can end all this business of coming to the end. A task in a dream may be endless, but it ends as the dream itself ends.

The fourth and perhaps the most important problem to be faced is that of the form and content of our knowledge of the world. The forms (the logical principles and the ontological categories) appear as somehow 'in us' and mental, yet applying to the concrete reality given to the senses. The distinction between understanding and sensation and their unity has to be properly understood. The normal and naive wakeful awareness includes awareness of sense-objects and of abstract forms not as separate factors. There is no distinction here of the universal and the particular, the form and the content. Empirical knowledge or concrete experience is formed-content, the judgment 'S is P' being a concrete unity of terms and relations, with no problem of relation of terms with relations appearing at this level of unreflective awareness. But philosophical introspection separates the two factors in knowledge and poses the question of their union. Philosophical introspection is but a form of the higher awareness (viz. awareness of non-existence) that produces the empirical reality from behind the wakeful awareness; so, with this introspection, the more pervasive and essential characteristics of this empirical reality first become known as somehow not necessary and objective, but 'in us', that is, in the subject of the higher awareness with which the empirical self now begins to identify itself. The separation of the formal factors from the material ones takes place with the dawn of Self-consciousness, which shows that the objects are but projections thrown out by the higher awareness for the enjoying contemplation of the higher Self, though passively suffered as external necessities by the empirical self. The formal factors being the more pervasive ones are first to be objects of higher awareness and they are thus the *a priori* principles of objectivity. The logical law of identity of non-equivocalness, which is the foundation of the three laws of thought, and the ontological categories of space, time, causality, substance, quality and quantity, which are essential *a priori* forms of all objects, become first apparent and distinct from the sense-data which they organize to yield the concrete reality. Philosophical introspection into wakeful awareness thus breaks it up into two parts and withdraws implicit belief from the formal part. This leaves empirical reality as a mechanical combination of the two parts with the pseudo-question, 'How they work together?' The answer to the question is that they work together because they are *not* really separable parts of a whole in wakeful awareness and when this awareness is partly disturbed by the awakening of the higher awareness (of nothingness that created it), they appear as parts and then they do *not* really work together, for there is already a withdrawal of the forms from the objective reality which is left as a meaningless blur of sense-data. Awareness of forms as 'in us' is a manifestation of the higher awareness and this leads to the awareness of the empirical world as an illusory one. This is the deeper implication of any form of critical philosophy such as Kant, for instance, offered us. The world of wakeful awareness appears as a dream, a play of names and forms *(nāma-rūpa)* created and enjoyed by the higher Self, but taken as reality and suffered by the lower self (which is a self-willed mode of the higher Self). The first stage of awakening of Self-consciousness of the higher awareness makes us aware of the forms as not in the object and leaves the sensuous content, now a meaningless haze or rhapsody, in the fields. This reduces the world to an illusion that is not over, but continuing, like a dream we sometimes have, one of which we are conscious, yet which is continuing. But a further transformation takes place as the higher awareness fully comes to its own. Then the sense-data too are found to be 'in us', that is, in the higher Self, which being aware of them as its own doing does not treat them as objective. This leads to the sublation of the sense-data just as the awareness of the dream as such leads eventually to its sublation. This awareness of the empirical world as a kind of dream is induced by philosophical introspection (of course of a meditative nature and not of a merely speculative sort) that persistently questions the objectivity of the objects given in awareness. It is also occasioned by the awareness of such phenomena as contradict the *a priori* forms or laws, e.g. the miracles connected with the lives and works of saints. In both the cases of waking up of the higher awareness, it is the same awareness working through the lower level from behind that is responsible. The dream is broken by a faint appearance of a questioning of the dream-reality and also by such events or situations in it as are grossly improbable. In both the cases it is after all the higher awareness (in the case of the dream it is the wakeful awareness) that is responsible. Thus it is understandable why it is said that it is Grace that is responsible for our enlightenment and salvation. 'The Self cannot be gained by the Vedas, nor by understanding, nor by much learning. He whom the Self chooses, by him the Self can be gained. The Self chooses him as his own' (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*). The Zen Buddhists believe in the cult of non-effort and sudden illumination (*sartori*). 'If you search for it (Reality), it goes farther from you', says a Zen Master. 'When the mind is ready for some reasons or other, a bird flies, or the bell rings, and you at once return to your original home; that is, you discover your now real Self', says the Zen philosopher D. T. Suzuki. *dhyāna* (meditation), practised by the Zen monks, is merely a quieting exercise of the mind and not a search after something beyond. The transcendental operation of the higher awareness in the lower as described here is the basis of the general doctrine of the mystics that the lower self (the ego) has to be stilled in order to realize the higher Self, the subject of the higher awareness. 'The Lord dwells in the heart of all born, O Arjuna, and with magic (*māyā*) makes all born beings spin about as though set upon a whirligig' (*Gītā*, XVIII. 6I).

The awareness of non-existence : Īśvara as its subject

The wakeful awareness is the awareness of existent things. The objective pole of this awareness is the empirical world of science and commonsense and the subjective pole is the empirical self that takes the world as implicitly real. The awareness higher in grade than this wakeful one is the awareness of non-existence and possibility, as said before. The subjective pole of this awareness is the higher Self for which there is nothing existing as actuality, but there is an indefinite object without any determination signifying possibility of objects to appear. This state may by directly experienced through pursuing in meditation (*yoga*) our ordinary experiences back to their origin, uncovering in the way layers of awareness veiling and modifying the higher ones. But this may also be roughly guessed through an analogy with a similar state in the lower plane of awareness. When one is just thinking of some indefinite object, just wishing any object to appear before one's imagination or memory, one experiences a similar situation. As the mind is turned objectward, there is an indefinite object or pure objectivity standing over against the mind. And then some particular object appears. It may be a word, a scene, or a thing. Thus I may have words like horse, the moon, a murder scene, and as soon as I suggest to myself that I must have the objects signified by any word, the particular object appears answering to my demands. I demand and I get. The desire for something in general produces a thing in particular out of nothing which is thus not merely nothing but alive with possibility and spontaneity. 'And God said, "Let there be light", and there was light', says the Bible. 'Thereafter rose desire in the beginning, desire, the primal seed and germ of spirit *(Ṛgveda, Nāsadīya Sūkta).* The awareness of non-existent objects is the ground of the awareness of existent objects : the former awareness being of the object in general or the indefinite object and the latter of the objects in particular or existing things. The question how particular objects appear can never be solved if we confine ourselves to the empirical level and try to explain them in terms of existents and causal laws. We shall then be landing ourselves either in an infinite regress or in a *petitio principii.* We have to break the magic circle and recognize the higher level of awareness as the creator of the wakeful awareness and its object, the empirical reality. As has been said before, it is not nothing creating something, but awareness of nothing (in particular) producing awareness of something in particular.

Now this higher awareness of non-existence of objects is the awareness enjoyed in relation to Īśvara of Vedānta as a subject. The object of this awareness, the non-existence of objects, is pure objectivity that negates all particularity or existence. Existence is particular spatio-temporal occupation and awareness of non-existence is awareness of the object in general. This pure objectivity, negating all concrete objects or existence, is *māyā* and Īśvara is Brahman (awareness in itself) standing over against *māyā.* Īśvara thus takes all existence as illusory. This awareness of non-existence has two internal modes. In the one, its object is pure and actual non-existence, when there is a blank before it, the empirical world having either not appeared as yet or disappeared. In the other mode its object is virtual non-existence, when there is the empirical world in the field, but it is through and through infected with and shot by non-existence in the sense that it is known as illusory and not taken for reality. These two states of awareness of non-existence are analogous to two states of empirical awareness, one in which the dream is not appearing (either sublated or to be appearing) and the other in which the dream is appearing but, the sleep having broken in part, it is taken as illusory and not mistaken for reality. Now Īśvara, the subject of this higher awareness of non-existence, has two modes of being corresponding to these two modes of awareness. Īśvara as contemplating pure objectivity and actual non-existence is one, and the other is for whom the world appears, yet which is known as illusory and created by Himself for His aesthetic enjoyment. In both these modes of godhood, Īśvara is *Māyādhīśa*, the wielder of *māyā,* with the power to project and retract the phenomenal world. Again, this awareness of non-existence, pure or virtual, of the world is awareness of its essentially non-describable and enigmatic nature recognized by Mādhyamika Buddhism and denoted by *śūnyatā* (void). Awareness of pure non-existence is regarded as *śūnyatā* when it means 'nought' which is said to be the matrix of all things. Thus *śūnyatā* is a negation, yet an affirmation. Awareness of virtual non-existence of the empirical world, that is, awareness of it as illusory, as what appears, but is not real and abiding, is also called *śūnyatā*, but now meaning this indescribable and equivocal nature of the empirical reality. Thus *śūnyatā* is sometimes said to be the begetter of the empirical reality and sometimes as the characteristic nature of this reality.

One further point may be mentioned. Just as the empirical awareness is not wholly modified into the dream-awareness, but also remains transcendent in an unconscious state working from behind the dream and waking to consciousness any moment, to reveal the dream-world as an illusory one, so is the case with the higher awareness of non-existence. In other words, Īśvara is transcendent besides being immanent, He is always there behind our wakeful awareness and He is awakened in us any moment when our empirical self lapses. The occasions we find in the empirical world to wake us up to the higher awareness, such as our philosophical, religious, ethical, or aesthetical disciplines or any strange accident such as a pathetic scene or a miracle, are all ultimately worked from behind by the transcendental Īśvara. As noted earlier, this is the intuitive basis of the doctrine of Grace in religious and mystical literature. The working of the unconscious higher awareness in the conscious from behind and then its waking up or becoming self-conscious is a well-known fact in modern depth psychology. 'The unconscious is an unglimpsable completeness of all subliminal psychic factors, a total exhibition of potential nature', writes the renowned psychologist C. G. Jung.

The highest awareness: Brahman

Īśvara is ever working in us unconsciously and also becomes self-aware in us at times when our empirical self lapses and we are aware of the world, first as an illusion that appears, and then, as an illusion that is over (or possible). Now this awareness of non-existence is again an illusory one to a still higher awareness for which there is no object whatsoever and no subject. That is, this awareness is neither of existence nor of non-existence and it is the awareness belonging to no subject. It is awareness in itself or pure consciousness. To this awareness, non-existence, pure or virtual, i.e. *māyā,* is itself an illusion that it first enjoys as an illusion and then negates altogether. Negation of a negation here is not equivalent to a positing of object originally negated, for the two negations are not on the same plane of awareness. Non-existence, as illusory or cancelled, reveals the pure awareness that is above any real relation of itself to *māyā. Māyā* thus rejected is known as *tuççha-māyā* and awareness that so asserts itself without any reference to *māyā* is Brahman. Brahman, unlike Īśvara, does not shine against a dark background of the pure object (i.e. non-existence and possibility) in relation to which it may be understood or defined. Brahman is perfectly self-evidential and self-subsistent ultimate reality with no parts or qualifications. Awareness in itself is the ultimate stuff out of which comes every thing else and in terms of which all things may be described. This Brahman is thus not known or proved by negating anything, because we are aware of it implicitly (for it works in us from behind) and we are never convinced of the ultimate reality of any object. We question and doubt and negate everything till we reach, after passing through many layers of illusory objectivity and corresponding illusory subjectivity, Brahman-awareness that is self-evidentially ultimate and does not question itself. The dream-awareness is operated from behind by the empirical wakeful awareness which then remains outside the focal consciousness in the marginal one. When this comes to full awareness, it is found to be worked unconsciously from behind by the awareness of non-existence of objects which then remains in the background as an unself-conscious activity. Again, when this awareness becomes explicit, it is found to be implicitly operated by a higher awareness which is beyond existence-non-existence and subject-object. Ultimately this higher awareness becomes explicit, revealing the lower as illusory. This highest awareness that is beyond existence-non-existence has been realized by the Upaniṣadic and other mystics. 'Then was not non-existent nor existent... That one thing, breathless, breathed by its own nature: apart from it was nothing whatsoever' (*Ṛgveda, Nāsadīya Sūkta*). 'To think "it is", is eternalism, to think "it is not" is nihilism : of existence and non-existence, the wise cling not to either' (Nāgārjuna : *Mādhyamika Śāstra*, Chap. XV). The highest reality is known as suchness (*tathata*) in Mādhyamika and Zen Buddhism and it is described as beyond all categories — existence, non-existence, unity, plurality, etc.; it is said to be neither *śūnyatā* nor its opposite. Thus it is that the Zen monks try to realize it through contemplating on such paradoxes as the following : 'This stick is neither what it is nor what it is not, what is it?' It is beyond everything we can think of as an object or subject. *Neti*, *Neti* — not this, not this (nor that), says the Upaniṣad. Dionysius the Areopagite says, 'The cause of all things is neither soul nor intellect, nor spoken or thought of, it is neither number nor order, nor magnitude ;...not divinity or goodness, nor even spirit as we know it'. So does Aśvaghoṣa write (in his *Awakening of Faith*), 'All things in the world from the beginning are neither *rūpa* nor *citta*, nor *prajñā*, nor *vijñāna*, nor *bhāva*, nor *abhāva*, they are after all inexplicable'. Here the ultimate reality or foundation of things is said to be beyond conceptualization, yet realizable. 'Speeches turn back from it, with the mind', says *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, yet it is always and implicitly working in us and we are aware of it in a way. So it is said that, 'He (also) does not know (i.e. is incorrect) who thinks he knows it not (*Kena Upaniṣad*). It is Brahman in us that causes the illusory levels of awareness, yet it is Brahman again that does not let us rest satisfied with anything short of Brahman and always stirs us to question and doubt the given objects. It is only a matter of knowing Brahman implicitly first and explicitly afterwards, in other words, Brahman in us first remaining as a silent and potential principle and then as a self-aware actuality. To know Brahman is to become Brahman.

Vedānta as Transcendental Phenomenology

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"What is that which being known everything is known?" This is the metaphysical question asked in Vedānta which clearly distinguishes it from an empirical question.[1] The question implies that, first, we have a *notion* of an absolute origin and explanation of all things or Being, and second, we have the capacity to know immediately or unitively this metaphysical object. In other words, we have such a kind of knowledge of this object, Brahman or ultimate Being, that it cannot be said to be known by us nor to be unknown either. It is vaguely thought to be the ground of every empirical knowledge of ours.[2] The metaphysical quest is made possible by the paradoxical state of our knowledge about Brahman, for it could not have arisen if we had either no notion whatsoever of Brahman or a perfect knowledge of It, as Śaṅkara points out.[3] Now this metaphysical quest presupposes a faith in man, in his essential unity with the core of Being. Metaphysical knowledge is conceived as a realization of this unity which is somehow forgotten. All true metaphysicians had this idea of their task. Socrates was feeling his way to a concept of man such that men could know the abstract universals behind the sensible particulars, and , so, have knowledge instead of mere opinion. Only thus could he really answer the Sophists. Plato believed the soul of man to be possessed of knowledge of the eternal Ideas as it lived in the world of Ideas from which it fell and was imprisoned in the body after drinking the waters of Lethe. So for Plato "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting" (Wordsworth) and our knowledge is awakening and recollection. Aristotle's 'active reason' is the richest and the immortal part of the universal Mind, Nous. Thus metaphysical cognition is a simple exercise of a function inherent in human existence by virtue of which man feels with total certitude and security his oneness with the whole of Being. It is no dark groping of a logico-empirical or speculative kind and so there is no scope for profundity here which, according to Husserl, is a sign of chaos and not of clear knowledge or science. The utterances of the Vedāntic seers and other metaphysical masters are made in a simple language of discovery. They do not argue nor do they take recourse to inference, analogy and postulation: "Listen, O the *devas*, I, through a discipline of the mind, am getting into communion with Brahman that has revealed you," says a Vedāntic seer.[4] Śaṅkara declares that in metaphysical inquiry argumentation has no real force or foundation and revelation is the only source of our knowledge.[5] Arguments are used only to make revelation intelligible or plausible to the ordinary intellectuals or rational minds who do not have any intuitive knowledge so far of the metaphysical object and want it in terms of their empirical experience.

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[1] Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, 1, 1. 3-4.

[2] Kena Up.. 1. 4, 2.2-4

[3] In his commentary on Brahmasūtra, Introduction.

The positive and self-confident attitude toward man and metaphysics was abandoned in Western philosophy by Descartes and the rationalists who regarded man in his cognitive activity as an isolated Ego using his cognition as a tool to know Being as an outwardly given object. Naturally the whole of Being could not be grasped with the whole of his self. This meant a breakdown of both metaphysics and human existence in Western culture.[6] The rift between faith and reason, which appeared with Aquinas, became wide and permanent. German idealism sought to rehabilitate metaphysics as a rational science. Kant showed that metaphysics is impossible as an empirical science, that the idea of causality operative in the universe cannot be employed to yield us the explanation of the Universe itself, which as a whole cannot be explained in terms of one of its components. Thus metaphysics cannot be a matter of "telling stories," as Plato would say. Hegel recognized the essential unity of man in his metaphysical enterprise and Being; the former is the self-manifestation of the latter. However, all such efforts at reinstating metaphysics and man were not effective against the growing positivism of the Western mind that ended in a total surrender of all metaphysics and, so, all bonds that unite man with the supreme Being or Brahman.

The modern positivist has entered the scene with an orthodoxy of an opposite kind. He cannot make any sense of the metaphysical object which is said to be a self-sufficient explanation of the universe. For he feels that the whole of the universe is an open system and not a closed book and, then, he cannot think of an explanatory principle that does not itself stand in need of an explanation, but appears to be a necessary fact. If the supreme explanatory principle appears to be necessary then the universe itself that follows from it would so appear. But how it could happen the positivist cannot imagine for he has before him the type of knowledge that empirical science represents and that is nothing but a progressive mapping of the sensible world, enumerating the items we have there and tentatively establishing certain regularities observed in their dispositions. The positivist also fails to make sense of the first cause or ultimate ground of the world for similar reasons. And he suspects that the metaphysician merely quibbles with words and indulges in picture-thinking and emotive gratification. The positivist does not find any cognitive significance in the discussions of metaphysics. This is understandable, for some people may not see as far as others do, but the attitude that some positivists have adopted is quite unreasonable. For they insist that the metaphysical statements must be nonsensical and that the only sensible ones are those that belong to empirical science which deals with the sense-verifiable things. They maintain that a sensible idea must have sense-verifiable consequences by means of which it may be defined and verified either directly or indirectly. But this is rather dogmatic, for how can anybody know the whole realm of objects that man is capable of knowing and, so, determine the meaning of meaning? The positivist's criterion of meaning is thus to be taken as a stipulation instead of an established truth. It merely expresses a particular attitude, one that helps science, and so, our practice. It expresses our biophysical nature. But we may have a metaphysical nature too. There may be dimensions of our human personality and the positivist has seen only one of them.

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[4] Śvetāśvatara Up., 2.5. See how the various levels of reality are gradually revealed in Bhṛguvalli of Taittirīya Up., in Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up. (III.6), and in Chāndogya Up. (VII, 1).

[5] See his commentary on Brahmasūtra (1.1.2; 2.1.6.).

[6] See Ludwig Landgrebe: "Phenomenology and Metaphysics," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Dec. 1949.

But the positivist's criticism of metaphysics has done one good to the latter. It has taught metaphysics to follow its own method and not try to imitate science and tell stories. The scientific method in metaphysics would yield what is known as an inductive metaphysics which will offer us indirectly verifiable results bearing some analogy with sensible experience and possessing that public character which metaphysics as an esoteric discipline lacks. But such a scientific metaphysics cannot deliver us the goods, for it cannot arrive at the ultimate explanation of things; the most general hypothesis or formula that it can offer us will always be open to further questions, and, moreover, cannot claim certitude. So that if metaphysics remains loyal to its original and fundamental objective and means business, it must not flirt with the scientific method. If one seeks to present or develop metaphysical truths in the manner of scientific concepts then one must submit one's accounts to the scrutiny of the logical empiricists who will then not allow any concept which is not verifiable either directly or indirectly, and certainly not any claim to an ultimate explanation and certitude. Therefore the alliance of metaphysics with science, though it can succeed to some degree and help one in understanding in logico-empirical terms some of the concepts of metaphysics, cannot go far enough and after a point becomes a positive danger to our intellect that must seize the fundamental distinction between the metaphysical quest and the scientific one. As regards the esoteric or subjective nature of metaphysics and its incommunicability, this is not an insuperable difficulty, for it only needs on our part as initial faith in metaphysics and ourselves which will lead us to take up the metaphysical quest in its true form in right earnest and in good numbers. A community of experience will then be discovered and so, a language will evolve. After all, even our sense-experiences are subjective in one sense, but become objective because we universally are concerned about them, and compare them with those of other persons, and thus develop a public science out of them. Metaphysics may as well be developed as a rational science provided our philosophers, instead of talking *about* metaphysics interminably, *do* it and talk it.

What, then, is the metaphysical method *per se* which we must adopt to do justice to our tradition of metaphysics and to ourselves as human beings, both of which are in utter chaos in this age of positive sciences? Our answer is that it is the phenomenological method that Husserl introduced us to, particularly in the last phase of his intellectual development. The method followed in his transcendental phenomenology will not appear strange to a student of Vedānta who finds in his discipline the same transcendental analysis of experience leading to the discovery of layers of subjectivity and their corresponding objective worlds constituted by the former's projective activity. This following of experiences back to their origin or home, stage by stage, ending in the all-important and overwhelming result that the inquirer's self or his transcendental subjectivity is the metaphysical object he in his ignorance was searching for as an object apart from him and, as such, never amounting to that true metaphysical object 'that being known everything is known.' The greatest discovery of Vedānta was the principle of identity of the self with Brahman or ultimate Being and the inquirer has to realize this identity in order really to find an answer to his metaphysical query.[7] Thus metaphysics is a personal adventure with one's very being and not with ideas. A student of Vedānta is required by the orthodox tradition of learning this system to, *first*, listen to the Vedāntic texts that contain the reports of the metaphysical experiences of great seers, *second*, understand the reports through intellectual exercise, and *third*, realize the experiences so reported through his own meditative search. Thus there is a place for discursive intellection in Vedānta, but this is to be employed in drawing an analogical knowledge about the metaphysical object which must be afterwards known *per se* in direct experience. The speculative knowledge about Brahman must be imperfect and mediate and only serves to draw the mind to the metaphysical truth which is presented first as a plausible hypothesis. It is only because of the logico-empirical bent of our minds that this procedure is required, but this is only a stage in the progress of the mind in its search for the metaphysical object. The mind has a notion of the object and, therefore, it poses the metaphysical question and will not rest satisfied with such answers as are given from its logico-empirical framework. Metaphysics is thus a serious business and not an intellectual pastime. The metaphysician knows the stake involved in his nature. Either he recovers his inherent bond with the ultimate Being and is firmly established in the universe or he is doomed to be as stranger in the world, "a guilty thing surprised." To philosophize was for the Vedāntic sages to satisfy at once the urge for a final explanation of the world and the yearning to feel at home in it. And they realized that such a philosophical discipline cannot succeed unless it adopts the method of direct self-discovery and finds the whole universe as a manifestation of his essential self, unless, in other words, the whole universe is seen as "fallings from us, vanishings," or as Husserl might say, as constituted by our 'intentions' or acts of objectification.

Let us now apply the phenomenological method and see what follows. The later Vedāntists made the analysis of error and dream their starting point. In such experiences we come across an apparently given object which yet demands to be explained in terms of the mind's own original power of projection and retraction. This is superimposition (*adhyāsa*) of what is not on what is and also subsequent withdrawal of it when the illusion is said to be over. This performance of the mind is said to be indescribable (*anirvāçya*) for there is no empirical analogy of it in ordinary experience where a judgment like "That snake in erroneous perception is but rope" or "The man in the dream was nothing" is nonsensical. The subject term here is not on a par with the predicate term, which therefore does not qualify it and the judgment appears to be self-contradictory. The judgment amounts to a declaration that the subject is unreal, but this is information about something that happened to the judging subject and not anything about the judged object. If "S is unreal" is conceived as an ordinary judgment, then S must somehow be in order to be unreal or non-existent and this will lead to the postulation of subsistent objects and so, to all the problems which are pretty insoluble. So that illusory objectivity is no empirical fact to be described or explained in the usual way. It is to be recognized as an original function of the mind that freely projects objects before it and adopts a mode of being such that it forgets for the time being their having been thus created and takes them for given objects. That which is immanent appears as transcendent; this is the principle of error, illusion, and of dreams. Now this principle must be securely grasped and borne in mind in our metaphysical quest where our task will be to realize as immanent and self-projected or intended what appears as transcendent or given. In Vedāntic terminology our task in metaphysics is to see through the illusory objectivity (*avidyā*) at various stages of the self. While the self as an individual ego projects illusions and dreams, it knows, as cosmic self, the empirical world which is thus illusory from the standpoint of this cosmic consciousness. The illusory objectivity at this universal plane is known as *māyā*. Śaṅkara, like Kant and later Husserl, is a transcendental idealist and an empirical realist and we can appreciate these thinkers only if we think in terms of phenomenological analysis of experience and, so, of levels or orders of subjectivity and objectivity.

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[7] "That Thou Art" (C̣hāndogya Up.), the prayer to the Sun to show its real form and let the devotee see the Person in it as his own self (Iśā Up.); "He who knows Brahman becomes Brahman" (Muṇḍaka Up.)

Now the cancellation of the illusion or dream reveals the empirical reality which is taken as given by the second order subjectivity that emerges from under the first that took the illusion or dream for reality. In fact, the second order subjectivity, S_2, projected the first order objects, O_1, and adopted a lower self-delusive mode, S_1, to take them for given objects. The breaking of illusions and dreams is ultimately the result of the awakening of S_2 sleeping in S_1. We know how our mind works during our sleep. It orders the dreams which are wish fulfilments in a profound sense, as modern psychologists have shown, and it rouses us from them or deep sleep at an appointed time when we wish to get up. Thus S_2 does not totally lapse but goes into a state of torpor, so to speak, and holding itself in abeyance, assumes a pose of S_1. It enjoys the experiences of S_1, its play acting self, and we are said to enjoy our dreams, both good and bad, which, as the psychoanalysts have established, express our own inner desires (such as sexual urge, love of position and power, and sometimes even of suffering and death). Thus dreams are created by S_2 for a fuller and richer life of experience as a supplement to its own waking experiences that leave many desires unfulfilled.

Now this S_2 that takes the waking world for a given reality is in its turn an assumed pose of a third order subjectivity, S_3, which lies dormant in S_2 and creates and enjoys the objects of so-called waking reality. This S_3 has been realized by the mystics of all times and places as their reports show. The Vedic seers speak of a stage of self-realization when they are liberated though continuing a bodily existence (*jīvanmukta*). In this stage one feels the world to be a shadow-show or a dream that is freely projected by one's higher order self just as we enjoy our day-dreams. One lives his worldly life only for the sake of play acting, so to speak. One literally realizes the world to be a stage where men play their various parts according to the sweet will of the author-director of the play with whom the liberated one is identified in spirit. The mind at this stage of inwardization enjoys its worldly joys and sorrows just as we ordinarily enjoy those of characters in a novel or drama or of our own imagination. This third order subjectivity or self is the God of religion, for it is the universal creator and correlator of images who appears to the individual, S_2, to be a real object forming a system or cosmos with rigid rules of co-existence and succession. Now we have evidence for this stage of the self from the testimony of the mystics including the Vedic seers. We, as Vedānta also direct us, have to listen to their reports, and to understand their message through analogy with ordinary experience by means of critical and speculative thinking and lastly, we have to verify in experience or realize the content so far known in an analogical manner as a possible entity. But even before this firsthand knowledge of God is achieved in us, we can have some assurance of it from certain more readily available experiences.

First, as Kant pointed out, the categorical forms of the empirical world, such as space, time, substance, accident, causality, reciprocity and some others, belong to the empirical ego-minds uniformly and are read into the world which, therefore, as it appears to us, is not ultimately real but mind-dependent. Now Kant's thesis is to be taken neither as a logical derivation from empirical observation, nor as a psychological analysis of our attitude toward the world. He explicitly forbids these interpretations. In the former version of his thesis the categories lose their *a priori* character, their necessity and universality, and become mere empirical generalizations, while in the latter version they become descriptive of man's temporary mental behaviour. Kant's intention was to offer the categories as *a priori* principles of our empirical knowledge as 'transcendental' presuppositions. We can understand Kant only when we take his analysis as a phenomenological one of discovering what is necessarily implied in our empirical knowledge, this implication being neither logical nor psychological. Kant's own justification for the categories in his 'Deduction' is very confusing and unconvincing. Yet his thesis may readily be accepted as correct. His real justification seems to be a phenomenological one, only he did not realize this. He simply saw or intuited the forms of empirical knowledge as being in the mind: being ordinarily unaware of this, he takes them to be given from the outside world, and, so, to be contingent, and thus falls into scepticism. Now Kant's thesis means, in the context of our phenomenological scheme that the categories are fashioned by the third order subjectivity, S_3 or God in us, who enjoys them from behind its assumed self, S_2 which takes them for given empirical laws. The individual and isolated minds or egos cannot constitute their own common nature according to a single uniform plan. This requires some power above them. A phenomenological and transcendental analysis, however, reveals to the analyst the categories as forms which he himself has fashioned and, so, he declares them to be *a priori* principles of empirical knowledge. In other words the analyst feels himself at one with God. Kant surely felt this when he said that our understanding does not create but makes nature. One who offers this doctrine, "the Copernican revolution," as a discovery and not merely as a speculative theory, must feel within himself the silent working of a higher self. This signalizes his faint rousing from the sleep and dream of life. Theologically speaking, this marks the advent of grace and salvation in his life. Now, Kant felt that our understanding could not create nature, for the matter or contents of our empirical knowledge, the sense-data, appeared to him transcendent or given from outside. But further meditation might show him that even they are ultimately mind-made. This realization would be sharing God's vision of things. Therefore philosophy, if it is a serious discovery of what is really behind appearances and not mere speculation on the analogy of appearances, is identical with active self-knowledge and salvation. Kant, however, stopped at a halfway house, and, so, was sceptical of metaphysics. He was not aware of the phenomenological method he implicitly adopted in his 'transcendental analytic.' But he could have at least thought of our doctrine which alone could solve the problem his philosophy raised and left unanswered. How could it happen, he might ask himself, that the sensible manifold said to be impressed upon the mind by a foreign realm of things in themselves fall in with the mind's laws ? There must be some affinity between the matter and form of knowledge, and how else and more simply may this affinity be explained than by the hypothesis that both are the creations of the same mind ? So, we see that both what Kant positively offered us, and what he failed to offer but is demanded by his complete thesis for its rounding off, point to our contention that we have a higher-order subjectivity implicit in our empirical waking one.

Second, this idea of a higher-order common mentality, S_3, working from behind the individual mind, S_2, is further made plausible as a metaphysical hypothesis by the results of research work on the psychology of speech and mental development of children. These show that there is no one single fixed and determinate world for all minds, but there are 'worlds' corresponding to the performances of language and of naming things. Language and the world of facts are not as opposed as they are thought to be. Language is the means of comprehending and categorizing our experience, and describing is not just reproducing in words what is apart from them, it is more like seeing faces in the clouds. In other words, it is constitutive of the world said to be described by it. Researches in animal psychology and speech also confirm this thesis of relativity and subjectivity of worlds. Some modern physicists like Poincare and Einstein and some philosophers like C.I. Lewis and others arrive at this thesis from general considerations and speak of creativity of the mind in science. A continual process of redefining the basic categories of empirical knowledge is going on in science. The concepts of space, time, substance and causality in modern physics are different from their classical forms. Now, all this tends to show that the higher-order subjectivity, S_3, devises various systems of experiences and corresponding forms of speech, and takes them respectively for given worlds and their reproductive expressions. Kant noticed only the forms of experience and language of the highly developed consciousness of the enlightened human society of his time and took it to be fixed for all minds for all times and places. His insight revealed the mind-dependence of a particular form of world experience. This form being found common to a large section of individual minds, a common base for them had to be imagined. The *a priori* character of the categories pointed to the hypothesis of a common mind working behind the individual ones. But the insight of the psychologists and philosophers has relativized the categorical feature of our experience and has made the hypothesis more plausible. In Vedāntic terminology this insight may be expressed by saying that the warp and woof of this world are but names and forms *(nāma* and *rūpa)*. This identification of the world with the form of language or speech has a parallel in the Western tradition in the Greek concept of Logos as the origin and foundation of the world, and also the Biblical concept of the 'Word' which is said to have been originally with God and then became incarnated in the world. All these ancient insights with various degrees of clarity and adequacy can be best understood in the light of our phenomenological findings which may thus gain some initial trust from the speculative thinkers, who may then adopt the right method, the phenomenological, to know the truth about these matters.

Third, our thesis regarding higher-order mentality behind the ordinary one is further supported by certain extraordinary mental phenomena observed from the very ancient times and more or less made plausible in the light of modern researches in parapsychology. Extra-sensory perception, precognition, thought-reading and thought transference, hypnotism and telekinesis are now recognized phenomena. Also prophetic and telepathic dreams have come to be acknowledged by modern investigators like Myers, Dunne and Tyrrell.[8] C.G. Jung believes that some of our dreams express our experiences of the forgotten past of the race and prove the existence of a 'collective Unconscious' or "a sediment of our experiences of the universe for all times."[9] These phenomena have led the parapsychologists to recognize a common substratum of our apparently isolated minds. However, this postulate of a universal higher-order mind on the analogy of our individual one is always a puzzle to our understanding for the analogy is never complete. One cannot imagine how a single mind can work in so many ways through so many empirical minds and take up so many attitudes or statuses at once. Only a direct experience of this mind by becoming or realizing what is thus analogically thought of by scientific speculation can deliver the required goods to the serious enquirer who, therefore, must take the all-important plunge in meditative search.

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[8] F.W.H. Myers : *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death* (1903), J.W. Dunne : *An Experiment with Time* (1937). G.N.M. Tyrrell : *The Personality of Man* (1947).

[9] See his *Collected Papers on Analytical Psychology* (1917).

Fourth, the disinterestedness of the mind with regard to the egotistic attachments and a dawning of a universal outlook marks our intellectual, religious, moral and aesthetic attitudes. An impersonal search after reason or power behind things and a realization of it as not alien or transcendent to our mind is the ideal of knowledge. Scientific knowledge is only a first step toward this ideal and the scientist who speaks of the impossibility of any further knowledge beyond the scientific is a prey to despair and dogmatism. Our intellectual quest is after "that, knowing which everything is known," and we cannot possibly stop short of this goal. But this shows that our intellectual adventure is an expression of and a pointer to a higher self that we possess. The fact of our metaphysical quest, as we have already explained citing Śaṅkara, proves the ideal of knowledge we tacitly hold in our mind. The quest only makes explicit what is implicit and vague. Our religious efforts too reveal the same story. We want to be at home in this world which seems to surprise and terrorize us. We want to fraternize with the world and its creator. We wish to be worthy and welcome inmates in this wonderful universe. We want to feel it to be our Father's house. And we also want to own other persons as our brothers. But all this wishing signifies the existence of the wished for object as our thirst does that of water. The world must be our home, only we have to realize this and for this we have to rise to the third order subjectivity or God-consciousness that is sleeping in us. The moral attitude is also an emancipation from the egotistic one and an identification through sympathy with other selves. It is self-universalization and self-sublimation. Therefore our moral culture also signifies the working in us of a higher self as many moral philosophers have recognized. Our artistic activities too are similarly significant for the key principle of art or of the production and appreciation of beauty is disinterested contemplation and imaginative sympathy. Beauty is said to be a bridge between man and nature. The object of beauty becomes an extension of our consciousness, an embodiment of our feelings and ideas which it is said to express. And the universality of art or beauty points to a common mentality behind our apparently diverse ones, and so, appreciation of art or beauty, as Tolstoy observed, socializes the self. Art thus emancipates man from his ego and brings him close to recognition of a higher universal self-working in him from behind.

The third order subjectivity, S_3, above (or behind) the second order, S_2, may be established by phenomenological probings into our mind and it can also be presented as a probable metaphysical postulate to those who are not initiated in this direct method of discovery but would follow the hypothetico-deductive method of science to obtain explanations of phenomena. The next step in phenomenology is to discover a fourth grade of subjectivity, S_4, behind the third, S_3. In this too we may follow the Vedic seers in their relentless self-analysis and arrive at what they have described as Brahman without differentiation, indescribable in empirical terms except by negation *(neti)*. This S_4 is pure subject-objectless consciousness which is implied by our conception of a creative mind, S_3 , that dreams this dream of life as so many egos, S_2. To S_3 the world is a dream work against which it is a creative and real entity. It cancels the reality of the individual objects throwing them as illusorily projected, but feels the necessity of creation or projection, and so, is faced with objectivity, without any object, or in other words, with the possibility of objects. There is thus subject-object duality in S_3 which knows itself as a subject against the form of objectivity or 'objects in general.' When the stage S_4 is reached all this necessity or urge for creation appears self-projected and illusory and, so, all objectivity vanishes. The self at this stage appears to be absolutely free. Brahman of Vedānta is best understood as pure consciousness, absolutely unconditioned and free, and so, full of bliss and beatitude. God *(Iśvara)* is Brahman in the self-posed mode of creativity, that is, He is Brahman as standing over against the form of objectivity or *māyā*. God is called in one Upaniṣad[10] the lord of *māyā* (*Māyādhīśa*) who, having created this world by His magical power, enters it and becomes bound by it. The statement implies a threefold gradation of consciousness, one S_2 that takes the world as reality, another S_3 that creates it and takes it as a make-believe affair, and another S_4 that takes this creation itself in the same manner. For that which is said to create the world by its magical power (which is interpreted by us as the power of projection we meet in dreams and vivid imagination) must be considered apart from the exercise of this power. The poet or the musician is essentially a human being not to be defined by his artistic capability. This stage of subjectivity, S_4, where all sense of subject-object duality vanishes and to which nothing is given but everything is freely created in a sportive mood and posited on lower grades of reality, is the goal toward which a phenomenological analyst is led. The latter cannot rest satisfied with any stage below this final one for he is then faced with an object or element of givenness which puzzles him. Since there is no sense of the object at the highest stage, there is nothing that transcends it or lurks behind it and everything is immanent in it and perfectly clear to it as are those objects to us which we freely imagine. So there are no unanswerable questions or puzzles for the enquirer at this stage where he is perfectly satisfied and quiet in his mind. Brahman knows the empirical world of our common experience as a dream within a dream, a dream that is fully understood as a work of fancy. Therefore to know Brahman or S_4 as a stage of subjectivity is to know that which being known everything is known, and to be identical with this ultimate cause and explanation of things. The Vedāntic seers have repeatedly told us of the identity of the ultimate metaphysical knowledge with the ultimate self-realization on the part of the enquirer as we have already mentioned before. The enquirer knows his own self to be the ultimate basis of all being he has been searching after, his real self behind his many assumed selves with which it had allowed itself to be covered up and concealed to itself as we do in dreams or fantasy. How this could be is a lazy question asked by the scientific intellect which assumes that everything must follow the pattern of its empirical experience and that inference from and analogy to this experience are the only ways of knowing the mysteries behind nature. The scientific mind must be told that we have more things in the world than are dreamt of by it and the only way to know them is to listen to the words of the ancient seers, ponder on them, and then delve deep into ourselves to verify and possibly improve upon them by actual experience. We must not merely sit on the shore of the ocean and speculate on the things that may lie at its bottom, we must take the plunge. If we take this all-important step in philosophy then we will naturally have scope for collaboration of efforts and mutual checking of results, and so, will be able to develop metaphysics as an interpersonal body of knowledge like science. To doubt the possibility of such a science and condemn all meditative researches in metaphysics as subjective illusions on abstract and antecedent grounds is idle and dogmatic. The idle man is the greatest prophet, goes the proverb and, of course, he has to be dogmatic too. To the true aspirants after metaphysical knowledge the Vedic Seer urges, "Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached, the path to the self is as difficult to pass over as the sharp edge of a razor."[11]

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[10] Śvetāśvatara, IV, 9-10

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[11] Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.3.14)

Vedānta and Ontology

8

The question I wish to raise here is how can the Vedānta metaphysics, that the world is illusory and only pure consciousness is real, be offered as a philosophical thesis. Some sages are believed to have a first-hand experience of this reality and have described it in paradoxes. The students of Vedānta are asked to repeat and meditate on these paradoxes till their meaning flashes on their minds. But until this happens what do those Vedāntic utterances mean? Obviously they are not meant to be meaningful in the ordinary sense and self-evidently true in ordinary experience. The world is what proves our illusory experiences to be illusory and the statement that the world itself is illusory cannot make sense unless some other experience replaces it in the same manner as the world does the dreams. The situation in dreamless sleep cannot do this job for we do not feel that the world ceases to exist when we sleep.

So that the Vedāntic metaphysics cannot be asserted as a meaningful statement in rational discourse. What then is the sense of the Vedāntic statements? It is foolish to say that the Vedānta philosophers offered us pure high-sounding nonsense.

We can make sense of such statements if we take them as axiological instead of ontological. The Vedānta philosophers wanted to say that we should treat the world *as if* it were unreal and as if our consciousness in its pure undifferentiated state such as we have in dreamless sleep were real. Reality is a valuational term for them and they asked us to realize what they said in the sense of making them real and not in the sense of their being antecedently real. It may be pointed out that even such apparently descriptive statements as 'This is a chair' is prescriptive in a way, for the brute fact or hard data are but non-descript sense-data. We are asked by the speaker to put together certain sense-data under the concept of a chair. In the case of the metaphysical statement in question we are asked to imagine the world as a dream. This is a more difficult demand to fulfil. We have no experience of any real piece of world being illusory. Yet we can *think*, after the analogy of dreams, that whatever we experience and take to be real may be a projection of a mind from behind our ordinary mind. The metaphysical statement is then metaphorical, it has a kind of significance instead of a direct literal meaning. The Vedānta asks us to think the world as an illusion and to live in this thought. It asks us to change our point of view.

That the Vedānta metaphysics is not meant to be a plain cognitive theory is apparent from other situations. Vedānta addressed to a very thin section of the people, the Brahmins, who were brought up in a very extraordinary manner. They were abnormal by our modern standards. The ethics of strict abstinance is integral to Vedānta. The Upaniṣads were never treated as philosophical texts available to all and open to rational discussion. They were secretly communicated by the sages to their worthy disciples who accepted the statements without a shadow of doubt. Thus it was not impersonal reason but personal faith that supported the metaphysics of Vedānta. The truth of this metaphysics was never claimed as public. A handful of people with a peculiar bend of mind, heritage and training, held them to be true.

But why then are the statements in the Vedānta indicative in mood? We may reply that what is believed to be more valuable thought on appearance may as well be called what really is while what is obviously there but something regretted and sought to be escaped may be said to be but what only appears. It is a matter of belief and language. Thus it is said by the idealists that we are what we aspire to be, not what we actually are. The demanded state of affairs is described as if it is achieved. Another question is that why do Vedānta philosophers offer arguments in support of their view if all that they meant was an appeal for one's change of standpoint? The reply is that if we inspect the arguments they will prove to be but pursuasive and as psychological aids to our thinking the extraordinary kind of thought. The arguments from illusion and our dreamless sleep are plainly of this sort. Śaṅkara makes it clear that since Brahman is transcendental it cannot be inferred from anything in the world. He speaks of revelation as the only source and support for his metaphysics. This is only a psychological support for there is no logical relation between the biographical statement, "P experienced X" and the existential statement, "There is X". The relation is psychological in the sense that on learning that P experienced X one may ask oneself that if P experiences X and values it may be I could also do the same."

Deontological Vedānta

9

Introduction

One salient trend of modern thought is deontology, by which is meant a denial of any ontology. Questions about what is or is not really there are said to be cognitively insignificant, having only an emotive or pragmatic import. "Does matter exist?" may be answered in two ways. First, "Yes, it certainly does, for aren't there chairs and tables, and aren't they material objects?" Second, "If you mean by 'exist' something of such a nature that such obvious evidence of its existence is no evidence, then your question cannot be formulated in the ordinary language of discourse and cannot be decided by ordinary empirical means. In that case we cannot give any cognitive answer to your question for one has to accept and speak within the framework of a system of language." To ask the ontological question is to ask whether the particular linguistic framework is valid or not according to whose rules we decide questions of existence or non-existence internal to the system. This external question cannot be formulated within the language system and so becomes meaningless, or rather, it becomes then a question of valuation or appraisal of the language system. To ask whether matter really exists or not is to ask whether the ordinary language which allows us to decide this question unequivocally is good enough.

Now a language system or linguistic framework is good or bad with respect to its aims and attitudes. Ordinary language serves to formulate our ordinary experiences, while the language of science does the same with regard to different spheres of scientific experience. Each system, with its implicit and explicit rules for deciding questions internal to it is to a less or greater degree fruitful in ordering its particular field of investigation, but the fruitfulness and, therefore, acceptability of the system is not the same as its truth or validity. Moreover, this acceptability has degrees whereas the truth of the language system or the existence of the facts referred to by it cannot have degrees. Our knowledge of truth and existence may have degrees, but something must either be true or not, must either exist or not.

The ontological questions then are not theoretic or cognitive ones in the sense in which the questions internal to a language system and decidable by the rules of that system are. We can decide whether material objects are or are not, whether numbers, electrons, causality, logical laws are or are not by reference to their respective systems where they operate. But we cannot similarly decide these questions treated as external questions. Then the question of their acceptability arises in the context of the respective tasks that they have to perform in our knowledge. Since this knowledge is so far only in the making and has not attained its ideal of a complete unified system, we cannot speak of the unconditional acceptability or non-acceptability of any system or framework of language.

To say that the world is unreal is simply false when one is speaking in ordinary language. Śaṅkara makes this point quite clear. Until and unless one has the extraordinary experience of something in the context of which this world appears to be unreal, one cannot justly speak of it as unreal. One has to accept the world as real so long as one has not the transcendental experience (*Brahmānubhūti*). To say then that the world is real is merely to say that the concept of the world is a part of the system of entities one has accepted in one's present search for an order in one's experience. The word "world" then belongs to the accepted language of one's discourse and the word "exists" or "is real" means "is a part of the linguistic system accepted for the present". But this acceptance is only provisional and it does not signify the truth of the proposition accepted or the existence in the metaphysical sense of the referent of the proposition. Thus the metaphysical statement "The world is unreal" is not debarred on any *a priori* grounds : rather its possibility is implied by the evaluative nature of the statement "The world is real", when the latter is treated as a philosophical one and, so, one external to the system of ordinary language.

Vedāntic metaphysics, then, which seeks to establish a reality beyond the world that is negated as a false appearance, is not to be taken as an ordinary descriptive enquiry. It ought to be treated as a prescriptive or evaluative discipline, as a reforming, instead of an informing set of statements. That such prescriptive statements are quite in order is seen from the consideration that otherwise we should be involved in a naturalistic fallacy, the error of confining ourselves to one set of definitions, because the world is ordinarily existing and our use of ordinary language does not permit us to assert metaphysically either that it exists or that it does not, it does not follow that we can never redefine our terms. To deny this possibility of our reformation of ideas would be like saying that because we at present mean by crows a kind of black bird, white crows are impossibilities and the expression "black crow" is redundant, while the expression "white crow" is self-contradictory. We have to realize that our definitions are at bottom empirical and provisional. There is no necessity in nature or experience, which is ever open-textured: our thought or language must therefore be kept flexible and we should see that the conventions we introduce into it do not become petrified. We must not be bound by our own free formulations.

It is experience, and not previous or established usage of language, that is the ultimate determinant of some metaphysics. The experience that prompts one to say that the world is real is a certain attachment to the sensuous aspects of this world which may be bio-socially more useful to one. The judgment in the indicative form, "The world is real," really means "I find the world significant and I recommend you to share my experience". The opposite judgment, "The world is unreal", similarly intends to bring about a change of attitude or outlook. These judgments are evaluative and as such neither true nor false in a strict sense. Therefore testimony is so very important with regard to the questions of their validity or worth. Śaṅkara admits the Vedic injunction that one has to hear these statements with initial faith, and then one has to meditate on them till one attains experiences that confirm them. Mere logical arguments cannot help us in these matters whose source and final court of appeal is an experience recorded in the statements of the seers.

Vedānta philosophy may be treated in this deontological manner and we think Śaṅkara and the Vedic seers might have this sense of value-judgment, instead of description, in mind when they offered the basic statements of the philosophy. This is seen from their insistence on some form of meditative discipline which they declare to be necessary for the realization of the experiences indicated by the Vedāntic statements. This realization brings about a radical change in the attitude to the world, and the whole significance of the statement lies in this change or transformation; so that to say that the world does or does not exist is not at all like saying that it has mountains or seas in it, but like saying that one ought to accept or reject it. Metaphysical experience concerns one's relation to the object which is said to be either real or unreal and so it is not a sensible experience. Since it is not an ordinary interpersonal experience which may be described by a normal interpersonal language and investigated in a co-operative manner, it differs from science; and the statements it makes are all of a prescriptive sort appealing to one's metaphysical nature, by means of which one inclines to take the world either as real or unreal.

We all have this metaphysical nature besides our sensible one, and the metaphysician appeals to this side of human nature when he proposes some metaphysical theory to us. The statement of such a theory, if it is judged as an ordinary empirical one, will appear to be nonsense, for its significance lies in a different direction which must not be missed. Thus both "The world exists" and "The world does not exist" are nonsensical expressions in a way, for the former is a tautology while the latter is a self-contradiction. But their significance lies on a different plane and one does catch it. The logical positivist of our time who rejects all metaphysics as nonsense is not really unaware of this metaphysical resonance-meaning of statements like the above, only he does not choose to call this meaning theoretic. We contend that since from an ultimate point of view even the most pinned-down statements of commonsense and science are in a way prescriptive, being proposals to view certain things in certain manners and to call them something, the metaphysical statements need not be treated as radically different from them. The difference between the theoretic and the normative activities and statements, though we provisionally accepted it at the outset for the purpose of exposition of the problem at hand, must not be treated as fundamental. When one judges that there is a table one is really proposing to others to judge the same, only one is more sure of their acceptance in cases like this than in those which are called value judgments, such as that it is good to speak truth or bad to disrespect one's elders. Moreover, just as there are both correct and incorrect cognitive responses, there are also correct and incorrect emotive responses; thus metaphysical discourse is not just an arbitrary matter.

Vedānta philosophy, therefore, if approached in a deontological spirit as outlined above, need not lose a jot of significance and value for our intellectual culture. It is only a false and impoverished notion of our total human nature, and an artificial magnification of the difference between the so-called cognitive and evaluative functions of our intellect, that lead some people to reject Vedānta or any metaphysics as nonsense. The very fact that we can demarcate between a good metaphysics such as Vedānta and a bad one such as materialism, and the fact that the teachings of Vedānta make a quick and wide appeal to the hearts of many people belonging to diverse walks of life and possessing unequal mental equipment, point to a view that it has its own particular kind of significance and science. To bring out the former and establish the latter is the task of every serious Vedāntin.

The second recognizes one Eternal Self only as manifesting in all creatures : these apparently separate existences may be produced by limitation of Love in them and the production of selfishness. When the fulness of Love is reached, the recognition of 'One without a second' is attained. As long as there is no desire for Love, which dissolves all limitations, there is individual selfish life following life, with the attendant miseries of birth, growth, old age, decay and death. There is no peace, no goal for those who do not learn to love : they beat backward and forward on the storm-tossed ocean of separation called the world, striving ever for the most futile and ephemeral of things, for personal and separate existence, for self-solicitude. Alas! What misery is theirs. Such striving fulfils not even the average conceptions of ethics and philosophy.

Self-affirmation is death; self-negation is life eternal.

Śaṅkarāçārya, the great expounder of the non-dualistic system, has pointed out that the teaching of non-duality comes as an amplification of other doctrines, not as a contradiction of them.

He, then, who holds this doctrine, can look with perfect sympathy and patience upon those who still need, or still see, a Deity, or deities, in nature, separate from themselves.

Deontological commonsense

It may be thought that we do not know what really is as long as we are engaged in sophisticated enquiries into logic, metaphysics and science, but that we can have this important ontological knowledge as soon as we revert to innate commonsense. But a little reflection will pull down such a hope. To get at commonsense beliefs with regard to the ontological question we have to look at the ordinary language and its implications. We have to inspect the use of the verb 'is'. It is tempting to say with Moore that since we commonly use expressions like 'There are material objects like hands and feet' and 'There are spiritual objects like minds', therefore both matter and spirit are realities. A dualistic ontology seems to be the creed of commonsense. But how ought we to interpret such expressions as 'There are fictions like fairies and Pegasus'? Some logicians, (e.g. Gilbert Ryle) propose that such a statement be rendered as 'There is nothing like fairies and Pegasus'. But the person of commonsense may object to this rendering and claim that by the first statement he means the being of non-existent things, and that being is a genus of which existent objects are a species. One may also go so far as to admit the second rendering and assert that 'there is' in this expression refers to being, which comprehends such particular classes on non-existent things called nothing. Commonsense may thus be said to believe in the reality of both classes of things that are ordinarily said to be existent and non-existent. This reality is vacuous, that is, we do not know what really does or does not exist by this ontology implicit in commonsense. It says that everything one thinks of has reality of some sort. But this means there is nothing unreal, or not to be thought of, against which we can place our concept of reality or being and thus understand it. Commonsense, it appears, has no definite ontology and if we interpret the ordinary use of 'there is' in the above manner we do not reach any tangible result. It seems that commonsense is too vague and unreliable to be a guide in our ontological quest.

Vedānta as an ontological thesis

The basic teaching of Vedānta is summed up by Śaṅkara in this way : The world and the ego are appearances, their reality being Brahman. As expressed by the Vedic seers and the Vedāntic commentators, the statements of Vedānta may be considered to constitute an ontological thesis. The statements are in the indicative mood and there are other statements that exhort us to hear, contemplate, and realize in experience the object described by the Vedic sages. This object is said to be one of knowledge, and it is Brahman and its correlative illusoriness of the world and the ego. We are asked to know Brahman. We are told that to know Brahman is to become Brahman. Śaṅkara lays stress on the intellectual aspect of this knowledge and distinguishes it from activity. He points out that knowledge of Brahman or liberation is neither a process nor a consequence of some ordinary mental effort; were it any such thing it would be as transitory as empirical objects are. There is no becoming of knowledge. In modern terminology, for instance that of Professor Ryle, knowing is an achievement-verb like arriving or winning, and one cannot speak of knowing, just as one cannot speak of arriving or winning, as a task or process. One has either known or not known, either arrived or not arrived. Moreover, this knowledge of Brahman cannot be causally related to any empirical process that may be said to produce it. This follows from the nature of knowledge as an ultimate and unique principle. It reveals that the object and the conditions of knowledge, such as the sense-organs in the case of empirical knowledge and meditative search in the case of metaphysical knowledge, are not its causes. The object of knowledge may alone be said to cause knowledge, for it is the differential condition of knowledge, but it is not known apart from the knowledge itself that reveals it, and therefore cannot be regarded as the cause of knowledge, which refers to an object beyond the self. Knowledge cannot be known or analysed; we only become aware of it. The self and the object are the two poles within knowledge, which is original and which has no temporality.

The psycho-physical correlates of knowledge are temporal but knowledge as such is non-temporal in the sense that it may be 'dated but not clocked', as Ryle puts it. In the case of metaphysical knowledge, Brahman recognizes itself all of a sudden after a lapse during which it thought itself to be an ego with the sensible world as its object of knowledge. This recognition has no necessary connection with anything in the empirical world, which is illusory : it is an event dated in the empirical world only in the way that the end of a dream is dated in dreamtime. Now, the statements of Vedānta, treated as assertions of the existence of metaphysical entities, create difficulties. First, how can anyone say that there really is Brahman and not the world when the standard example of what there really is, is the world? If Brahman is antithetical to the world, so that when one thinks of Brahman as existing one also thinks of the world as illusory, then one should also state that Brahman is illusory and that the world exists, unless one wants to play fast and loose with words. To say that the world does not really exist and that Brahman does, is to use the word 'is' in a new sense that does violence to the old one, and the user or the Vedāntists must justify this new usage. Secondly, they seek to justify this new usage by asserting that what really exists cannot be denied—while what does not can be—and that while the world is found to be cancelled by the experience of Brahman the reverse does not hold. Thus, the Vedāntists say, we deny the existence of an illusory snake when we perceive the rope that appeared to be the snake. But this way of defining existence will not help the Vedāntists, for what guarantee is there that the experience of Brahman will not give way to that of the world or to any other experience? How can any fact or state of affairs be necessary? The world as we inter-personally find it is merely defined to be what is, so that we may distinguish our imaginary and illusory objects from it. The latter have no regular connections amongst themselves nor with the world, so they are discarded as useless things in the context of the world which is useful.

Our ordinary language defines the terms 'world' and 'is' with a particular bio-social aim to deal with our experiences and, as far as we can go by these definitions, the existence of the world is necessary, or the assertion of the world being illusory is self-contradictory; but this logical necessity is not coercive in any ultimate sense, for it rests on a pragmatic consideration and, ultimately, on our choice and decision. Therefore, one should realize that to assert the existence of Brahman or the illusoriness of the world is equally unnecessary. The Vedāntic statement is, then, one of an experience which one chooses to regard as more important than the experience of the world for certain specific ends. Once one has decided to accept some object revealed by some type of experience as more significant than others, and when one declares that it alone exists while others merely appear to do so, one may be so used to this line of thought that one cannot conceive of anything else as possible. But this is a psychological necessity which can be seen through and overcome by rational thought.

Questions of validity

We thus see that an ontological rendering of Vedānta teachings raises certain questions of validity which are difficult for the ontologist to meet. However, we must note that the ordinary positivistic denial of the ontology of Vedānta can easily be repulsed. The positivist says that only sensible experiences can properly be said to be existing and that the non-sensible are non-existent. This is dogmatism. Why should sense-experience be regarded as the touchstone of existence? We can see through the positivist's rejection of metaphysics and uncover the methodological principle that what can be intersubjectively, and with greater certainty and definiteness, investigated, is more real than what cannot; but this is a bio-social criterion of reality and we can always ask whether what is bio-socially fruitful is real. Thus, 'reality' is an evaluative term and not a descriptive one. We may make a convention amongst ourselves about what we will consider and call real, and so long as we follow this convention our use of the term 'reality' or 'existence' will be descriptive, but at bottom it will be evaluative and open to question and revision. The positivists' definition of existence or reality is a convention they have set up and is therefore not incontrovertible. If any linguistic usage or logical rule claims to be more than a mere nominal definition it must have a basis in fact; since facts are what we experience and can never make to order, this rule is never necessary or compulsive, but open to inspection and correction. The positivists' glorification of sense-experience is thus as dogmatic and as covert an expression of this particular preference as the metaphysician's denunciation of it in favour of his metaphysical experience.

Another criticism of ontological metaphysics is that it cannot be stated meaningfully. But here the positivist means by meaningfulness *that which is verifiable in sense-experience*—either directly or indirectly, and either completely or partially. In other words, a term is meaningful if it is either a name for something observable or makes some sort of difference to something observable and is not completely neutral to it. We must have some sensible means proving either correct or false a meaningful assertion. Now this meaning of meaning is a convention that science sets up in order to succeed in a particular kind of investigation, i.e. that of organizing sensible phenomena in a sensible or rational manner. But neither the scientist nor the positivist can prove that there cannot be another meaning of meaning. They may very well say that a term like Brahman or illusoriness of the world may mean something very important, though this meant object does not make any difference to any item of the world. The same phenomena will appear in the same order whether Brahman is or is not, or whether the world is real or illusory. But is that any reason for our rejection of the expressions as meaningless? There may, however, be separate grades or strata of reality, but it is dogmatic to judge the reality of an order of entities by the contacts it makes with the sensible order of this phenomenal world. We must not impose an arbitrary boundary on our minds' capacity to receive the impress of various grades of objects and, so, to mean them. The sensible nature is not the only one we have; our human nature is not merely a limited and fixed thing but has indefinite breadth and depth. We are not only sensible creatures but metaphysical also.

The argument held against metaphysics that metaphysical expressions like 'Brahman' or '*māyā*' are not as definite and uniform in meaning as scientific ones is not as strong as it may at first appear. For even scientific terms are fringed with vagueness and subjectivity because of the primacy of first-person experiences in scientific concept-formation. Again, metaphysical terms could be improved in definiteness and universality if a greater number of people were to take to metaphysics and meditate on supra-sensible entities. The sensible nature of man is developed and sharpened by the scientific culture of our times and scientific concepts and precepts become enriched and definitive through a co-operative search for knowledge of this specific kind. Similar results are expected in metaphysics if we devote ourselves to this type of knowledge. The amount of agreement we find today amongst the various metaphysical traditions of the world is sufficient to encourage us to cultivate metaphysics on a co-operative basis as a science.

Thus we find that if the scientist or the positivist believes in an ontology of his own, that is to say, in the sensible world as the real or truly existent, then he has no reason to forbid the metaphysician to believe in Brahman and the illusoriness of the world. He cannot make everyone agree with his definition of what really is and with his criterion of meaningfulness. There may be other definitions and criteria. The best thing is to see that at bottom these matters are evaluative, and that, instead of ontologizing, we ought to express our beliefs of what really does or does not exist only with regard to experience and what we approve and like to recommend to others as valuable. This leads us to a deontological interpretation of ontology.

Deontological Vedānta

We believe that the Vedāntic statements, which are expressed in declarative sentences as ontological assertions, may as well be rendered into a prescriptive form. The statement 'The world is illusory, Brahman alone exists', may be rendered as 'Experience the world as illusory and Brahman as the only existent'. The statement 'That thou art' may be rendered as 'Realize yourself as That'. The

Vedic injunction 'to know Brahman' may be regarded as an exhortation to alter our ordinary worldly behaviour and to realize that the world is an illusory projection of a spirit that is our real nature. Just as the Vedic seers prescribed certain ritualistic performances which were calculated to advance our worldly interests, it may very well be that they also prescribed a certain psychological attitude or mental standpoint which they thought was most valuable. The metaphysical or metapsychological scheme they offered us was, in their view, a mere trapping to this main over-all purpose, this transformation of the human attitude to the world. The deontological interpretation of Vedānta appears to be supported by the general attitude of the Vedic seers that their teachings are not meant for all, but only for the deserving few, and that in these matters of metaphysical knowledge it is the testimony of the seers, and not ordinary perception and inference, that is the source and test of truth.

We refer here to the doctrines of *adhikārabheda* and of *śabdapramāṇa* which Śaṅkara explains and insists upon. Though we cannot admit today the ancient orthodox doctrine that only Brahmins-by-birth are competent to study Vedānta, we must grant that a definite mental preparation of a special kind is necessary for such an undertaking to be at all meaningful. Thus, as Śaṅkara lays down, the candidate for Vedānta must develop an ability to demarcate between what is temporary and eternal, to desire liberation and no worldly gain ; and he must be morally disciplined. This means that not everyone, but only those few who have cultivated a certain mental disposition and adopted certain aims and ideals of life, can appreciate Vedānta. With regard to the second doctrine, we may remind ourselves of Śaṅkara's view that reasoning (*tarka*) has no place in metaphysical reflections other than in helping us to settle the meanings of the revelatory texts, the Upaniṣads.

Now the question is how to judge whether in this deontological orientation of Vedānta the system gains in philosophical significance or not. We have shown the difficulty of accepting Vedānta as an ontological system, though we have also shown how an ontologically oriented science cannot justly criticize Vedānta ontology. We have seen how any ontology appears to be dogmatic and must be reduced to a normative system setting up standards of value instead of asserting what is really there. We thus recommend our readers to treat ontological statements as stylistic expressions for evaluative ones. 'X is' means 'X is considered by me, the speaker, to be important', and is thus an elliptical expression for a value-judgment. There is no universally agreed convention regarding the general use of the terms 'is', 'existent', or 'real'. Whatever is asserted as existing does exist in the sense that it forms a part of the particular system taken to be real. Whether the *system* really exists or not cannot be settled by any means. The same conclusion may be reached through consideration of what we mean by the truth of a judgment, for by this is meant the reality of the fact referred to by the judgment. We have already shown how the terms 'truth' and 'existence' are evaluative terms signifying one's acceptance of the judgment and the fact judged, respectively.

Now, the deontological form of Vedānta is superior to the ontological one in so far as it is free from the appearance of naivety and dogmatism and, in consequence, immune to the attacks of other ontologists who set up their own definition of what is, and do not allow any other to compete with it. An all-inclusive definition of the ontological predicate 'is' or 'existence' as a genus of the several other which might be regarded as its species is also not fruitful, as we have shown. A deontological reduction of the basic Vedāntic statements need not enter into controversy with any other ontological school, but it has to justify itself in some way or other. The statements are expressions of a particular sort of preference and are proposals for us to accept. There is no question of proving the truth of the statements, which, being proposals, are neither true nor false. This saves useless controversy. But this does not mean that the Vedāntist is free of his responsibility to justify his position to those he addresses in his statements. Why should one accept the Vedāntic statements?

By way of justifying his position, the Vedāntist will appeal to our common love of happiness and will show how acceptance of the Vedānta teachings will ensure one this happiness in its richest and most stable form. The ordinary joys of the world that we seek in pursuit of our inherent love of happiness do not really satisfy us. They leave behind a bitter taste because, never pure, they are adulterated with pain, because they are transitory, and because they are associated with an unrest that tires us out. Moreover, these joys cannot make up for the general sense of our being strangers in this world which we do not know and which we have to leave sooner or later. We are continually prey to a feeling of dread. We cannot overcome this feeling of insecurity, helplessness and dread unless we know this world as an appearance that has no other basis or source than our own self. This self, again, must be known as one self in all the living forms that appear to have individual separate selves, for this appearance of other selves and one's own self as isolated is another source of our puzzlement and dread. To overcome the dread and despair brought about by these apparent barriers between one's self and the world on the one hand, and other selves on the other, man has cultivated his sciences—physical and social. Yet it is obvious that this slow and tedious process of fraternization with the world and other selves can only yield very limited results. Our task of mutual understanding and of understanding our world is too urgent to brook delay. Every one of us wants the highest happiness, that peace and beatitude where we find ourselves to be the very ground of this world, and find other selves, whom we wanted to embrace, to be our own self, and where we find in our very self the source of all happiness.

Vedānta holds before us this extreme ideal of happiness. Believing that none but the perverse will reject it, it offers us the conditions of attaining this state of bliss. Now there are some statements in Vedānta which set up an ideal of happiness that may not appeal to us as it is a bare and negative ideal. According to these statements, one has to seek complete quiescence or *nirvāṇa*, in which state one will have no object-consciousness, merely a bare awareness of one's self. The self in that state will not be reincarnated after the death of the body, and the individual will be relieved from the wheel of life. This may not appeal to many, for whom, however, there is another set of statements in Vedānta that speak of a more positive and concrete kind of happiness. These state that one has to regard the world more or less as a dramatic performance and oneself as a player with a particular part in it. Here the world and the individual self are to be viewed as illusory. One's real self is to be experienced as the author of the drama who enjoys the various scenes and emotional attitudes both as a creator and as a beholder of the artistic work. This is a more readily understandable and richer kind of happiness and, therefore, justifies the Vedānta proposals that urge cultivation of detachment from the world and of a corresponding mentality which will bring one to look upon it as a play or performance of one's own making. The terms 'illusion' (unreal, false, *mithyā*) and 'Brahman' have to be so conceived as to suit this view of happiness. 'Illusion' means aesthetic appearance, and Brahman here is not subjectless, objectless, pure consciousness, such as some Vedāntists set up as the ideal, but is more like *Īśvara*, who is the creator and enjoyer of *māyā*. By liberation here is meant aesthetic detachment, which is necessary for aesthetic delight in everything in the artistic performance, whether good or bad, joyful or sad. It is liberation while living and appreciating life in all its variegated shades of joy and sorrow and different tones of morality. This ideal of *jīvanmukti*, understood on the lines of aesthetic detachment and delight, may serve to justify the Vedānta teachings for most of us. 'He is *rasa*', says one Vedic seer (in *Aitareya Upaniṣad*) and *rasa* is defined by one aesthetic thinker as the taste of one's own consciousness that one gets when aesthetically enjoying the emotions depicted in art (Abhinavagupta in *Abhinavabhāratī* and *Dhvanyālokaloçana*).

We have to orient Vedānta aesthetically a little to justify its statements interpreted as proposals, to the modern man, who is unwilling to listen to any and every proposal to take up some particular line of self-culture. He understands happiness and aesthetic delight and does not care for any abstract metaphysics or distant ideal; so it is possible that he may understand the message of Vedānta if it is given two twists in interpretation : one a deontological twist, rendering the declarative statements of Vedānta into prescriptive ones, and the other an aesthetical twist, interpreting spiritual detachment, liberation, and delight in aesthetic terms. Vedānta without the first interpretation sounds too much like a pseudo-science, and science itself is at present offered deontologically. Vedānta without the second interpretation is approachable by, and justified to, only a few exceptional persons. However, basically, Vedānta is a vision that springs from freedom and a proposal that one is free to accept or reject. So one need not interpret Vedānta drastically, that is, misinterpret and vulgarize it for the sake of popularizing it. Liberating Vedānta beyond a certain point is vulgarizing it, and one must rather rise up to Vedānta than bring it down to one's normal level of feeling and thought.

Modern research in philosophy has discredited ontology. No assertion of existence is cognitively possible and meaningful. It is expressive of the speaker's preference or selection when he uses the word 'existence' or 'reality' in connection with certain entities which he thinks matter enormously to him and ought to matter to others more than anything else. In other words, 'existence' and 'reality' are not descriptive terms like 'brown' and 'large', but evaluative ones like 'good' and 'beautiful'. The statement 'X exists' means 'The fact that there is X is good to believe'. The statement is also equivalent to, 'That X is, is true'; here 'true' is an evaluative or normative term like 'good' or 'beautiful'. At any rate, the ontological judgments are value-judgments and so are egocentric ones. Thus ontology cannot be presented as a science, but only as autobiographical statements about one's own beliefs, and as proposals to others to accept them. Even ordinary statements of fact and scientific statements are basically evaluative and prescriptive—not cognitive and descriptive. The greater amount of actual acceptability in their case, which is a contingent fact, leads one to take them for the standard of cognitive and descriptive statements. But there is only a difference of degree in the acceptability of the two kinds of statements, and so no radical or fundamental difference can be established between the categories—such as cognition, description and factuality on the one hand, and appraisal, prescription and value on the other. Moreover, what is more widely accepted today, and therefore taken as more acceptable, objective and cognitively significant, may not be so accepted at some future time. We see thus that the relative lack of order or community of opinion in ontological discourse is no indication of its inferiority as a cultural discipline : every other discourse is equally tainted with subjectivity. Our object here is to show how, in the context of this deontological thesis in philosophy, ought we to interpret and justify the Vedāntic teachings.

Briefly, our answer will be this that the Vedāntic maxims have to be regarded as records of certain first-hand and first-person experiences, and as recommendations to others to have them and treat them as of supreme value.

Autobiographical Report

There are no ontological implications of commitments in the basic statements of the Vedāntic philosophy. Therefore, Vedānta is an autobiographical report by ancient seers who implicitly trusted that the experiences they described might be undergone by anybody and be found supremely valuable. The question of the truth or validity of the Vedāntic teachings will have to be treated as a question of their fruitfulness as a means to the end intended by them. This end is happiness, or *ānanda*. As far as, firstly, we can regard this end to be the supreme end of life, the scientific, moral and aesthetic ends being treated as a means to this end, and, thus, proximate or instrumental goods; and, as far as, secondly, we can realize supreme happiness through following the Vedāntic teachings, and thus prove its fruitfulness or adequacy with regard to its intended end; so far can we hold the teachings to be significant and true in the evaluative sense. One will have to justify one's study and practice of Vedānta in the same manner as one justifies one's scientific enterprises. The reference to specific ends is always there in such a procedure, and no absolute validity or incorrigible truth or goodness of any scientific theory can be established. Thus Vedāntic philosophy does not suffer through comparison with modern science. Rather, it gains, in as much as the end aimed at by Vedānta is more comprehensive than that of science : science seeks bio-social happiness, which is temporary, while Vedānta seeks total and permanent happiness. Vedānta teachings appear to us vague and speculative in character due only to our lack of seriousness about life, and we do not even try the various and difficult ways to achieve seriousness. Salvation, peace that passeth understanding, bliss and beatitude— all are empty words to most of us who are satisfied with the little we have. Vedānta says that happiness is in the Infinite (*bhūmā*) only, and the path to salvation is as sharp as the razor's edge. Any apparent inferiority of Vedāntic philosophy to science as a cultural discipline is only an illusion caused by our idleness or inertness (*tamas*). We must be more alert and adventurous and must 'arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached'.

Deontological thesis in general

Existential statements, whether they assert or deny the existence of some particular or universal entity, are evaluative in nature, not descriptive. 'Existence' is a formal concept, indicating a status one wants to assign to the entity one asserts as existent, and not a true property like resistance or flexibility, and therefore a bogus predicate. In other words, existential judgments are value-judgments which are not informative in themselves but only of the attitude of the person making the statement towards the entity he asserts or denies as existing. Take, for example, the statement 'Matter exists', which is like 'Matter moves' in grammatical form and leads us to treat it as an informative statement. But a little reflection will tell us that its logical form is quite different from that of the latter statement, and that the grammatical form is no clue to the logical form. For by saying that matter exists we do not supply any information regarding matter : we merely indicate the ontological status of matter. This status reflects our preference or decision guided by the fruitfulness or advisability of our using the concept of matter in discourse, which aims at comprehension of experience. Now we must note that experience is an open system; that the advisability of using a concept admits of degrees, while existence can have no degrees (matter either exists or does not); and that advisability or acceptability of the use of a concept is only relative to a field of investigation—and we have not so far found any all-pervasive single field of investigation where any particular concept or entity has proved indispensable. Therefore this fruitfulness or acceptability of the use of a concept or entity is no evidence of its existence or ontological status.

This deontological nature of existential statements may be shown in another way. Let us ask how one can determine whether matter exists or not. G.E. Moore settled this question by recourse to commonsense and ordinary language. He said that since one cannot deny that one has two hands, one cannot deny that matter exists. But this argument misses the point. It is admitted by idealists that in ordinary discourse we call hands and feet material objects and say that they exist; but the point of our raising the question whether matter exists or not is that we are subjecting our conventional language-system or conceptual framework to critical enquiry. To forbid such questions regarding the adequacy of the accepted system or framework is to dogmatize and commit what is called the naturalistic fallacy. Our nominal definitions—matter is what exists, iron is what sinks in water—are good conventions based on previous experience, but they must admit of inspection and revision in the light of experiences; otherwise, they will be 'merely' nominal or verbal, and will lose significance. Therefore, the question whether matter exists or iron sinks in water or fire heats must always be kept open.

The way to settle these questions, however, is not simple and clear-cut ; for it is the efficiency of the concept in systematizing experience in a particular field that will determine its acceptability in that field, and the general utility of a particular field of investigation in human culture will determine the fruitfulness of the concept. It is evident that one can never come to any universally acceptable and permanent decision about these existential questions : for, involved in the making of this decision are, first, experience—which is open-textured—and, secondly, one's sense of what is a simple and most fruitful conceptual tool in a given context of experience. One's subjective preferences are thus necessarily mixed up with the questions of settling what does or does not exist. So we have called such ontological questions evaluative rather than cognitive.

Another way to express the same idea is that used by Professor Gilbert Ryle of Oxford. Suppose we take the statement 'Fairies are fictions' after 'Metals are good conductors', regarding fictitiousness (i.e. unreality or non-existence) as a property and the grammatical predicate 'fictions' as a proper predicate. We would then be led to ask what the entities are which are spoken of as fictitious; and, since fairies do not exist (if the statement is true), then there must be some sort of being of fairies in order for them not to exist and to be spoken of as non-existent. Thus 'subsistent' objects, which have neither existence nor non-existence in the ordinary sense, have to be introduced. This creates more problems for philosophy that can be solved. The solution is to deny such ontological terms as 'reality', 'fiction' etc.— any position as logical predicates—and to treat them as status-words. The statement 'Fairies are fictions' should be rendered 'There is nothing like fairies' or as Russell suggested, 'There is no X such that X has the properties p, q, r, which define a fairy'. This may check a misleading interpretation of the statement and our postulating subsistent entities. We should see that while we can say that there are good conductors we cannot say that there are fictions, so we must treat the ontological predicates as bogus and the ontological statements as non-cognitive and evaluative.

Deontological logic

The ontologists have one great support—logic. Logical laws are universal and necessary; and since they apply to the world they must be reflections of invariant traits of the world. In other words, the ontologist believes in the existence of some permanent features in all possible worlds. This is a mistake, however; for the fact that we cannot possibly conceive of a reality that violates laws shows that we cannot prove the necessity or truth of these laws for all possible reality or worlds. For what cannot disprove logic cannot prove it either. The truth is that logical laws are regulative principles of discourse; they define what we understand by consistency of discourse. The result of this convention is that we cannot speak of anything being such as to violate our logic. The ontologist, however, mistakes this result of a convention for a condition of the employment of logic. He argues that since logic is fruitful in our description of reality, reality must be logical. But this is arguing from an egocentric predicament, arguing that since we cannot, according to our convention, describe a kind of reality that disproves our logic, that reality is impossible. The logical positivists, and Ernest Nagel in particular, have exposed this fallacy of the ontologists.

Let us consider the law of non-contradiction, which is defined by Aristotle as 'that the same attribute cannot at the same time belong to and not belong to the same subject in the same respect'. The ontologist claims that this principle cannot be violated by any actual example. But can we produce evidence against this principle? Can we point to an attribute that both does and does not belong to the same subject in the same respect? We cannot do this, not because reality cannot violate the principle, but simply because if we could produce such evidence it would not be proper on the ground that the attribute in question does not both belong and not belong in the same respect. The ontologist will beg the question and assert that the attribute *cannot* both belong and not belong to the same subject in the same respect. What emerges from this argument is that the ontologist defines the phrase 'in the same respect' in such a manner as to make impossible violation of the law of non-contradiction in any case. Thus the law is a convention and its necessity is not indicative of any ontological invariant, but of the needs of our communication. To argue that since communication would be impossible without the law of non-contradiction, therefore it must be grounded in reality, is again circular—for we cannot conceive any kind of illogical ground of logic. The choice of a particular set of logical principles of inference and usages of logical terms like 'and ..... not', 'either..... or', 'if...... then' is determined by its greater adequacy in systematic knowledge, rather than by a 'greater inherent necessity' on ontological grounds. A logical system is justified not by empirical observations but by its effectiveness in yielding a certain system of a desired kind, as in quantum mechanics where we require certain rules of inference different from those of ordinary discourse. So our language-habits may have to be changed to cope with various new kinds of experience. *There is no one pervasive factual world with a single logical system which can be used to systematize it.* The structure of facts is not an objective entity, but depends largely on our activities of symbolization and special problems, and our aims and attitudes, besides our experimental findings.

So logic is a matter of convention and decision and its *a priori* necessity does not have a factual but a methodological import, and so does not permit one to draw any ontological conclusions.

Deontological metaphysics

There is a sense in which the term 'metaphysics' is used to designate the study of such principles and entities as are not observable, but which are postulated in order that the observables may be systematically thought of or comprehended[1]. Thus a metaphysician needs to be not an ontologist, but a methodologist or a phenomenologist, who will point out certain useful presuppositions or *a priori* principles of factual knowledge. Kant denied metaphysics in the ontological sense, but offered the categories of knowledge, which are not known empirically, but by means of what he called a transcendental reflection on our knowledge situation. However, with regard to Kant, we must observe that, first, he implicitly admitted ontology when he admitted the thing-in-itself or noumenon behind the sensible phenomenon, and secondly, that in asserting the *a priori* validity of his categories he was virtually speaking for thier absolute existence. He ought to have treated the categories as regulative principles, which are both logically and psychologically *a priori* in the sense that one has to admit them first in order to get along with knowledge, but they could not be claimed to have validity *a priori.* Their validity depends on experience. Kant's argument in support of his contention is defective. Experience may show the regularity that leads one to think of a single objective space and time and, so, of the pervasive principles of knowledge. But what is the guarantee for the future? Thus no ontological conclusions are entailed by the methodological concepts or framework that the philosopher may offer. These conceptual frameworks will naturally change with the content or experience they order.

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[1] e.g. as Swami Vivekananda remarked, 'a point is that which has neither parts nor magnitude, and a line has length without breadth.... These are metaphysical conceptions'.— Ed.

There is another serious point. The so-called metaphysical concepts that are said to function as pervasive first principles of knowledge may, after all, be vacuous, that is, devoid of all applicability. For it is doubtful that we have one basic structure of knowledge. It is apparent that philosophers have seized principles that function in a particular science and have generalized them as principles of all knowledge. They, in their urge for a comprehensive outlook on the universe, have employed the principles analogically to picture the universe as a whole. It is doubtful whether the Kantian categories hold good for every kind of knowledge we have in the various sciences. The concept of causality found in a physical science is different from that found in a biological one. In any case, the special categories of science, which are many and conflicting, cannot be legitimately treated as pervasive traits of reality.

Thus metaphysical principles, such as space, time, matter, spirit and causality, even though they may be useful concpetual tools for the comprehension of experience, in the same way as the logical principles, have no ontological consequences. They are mere proposals for broad conceptual frameworks which may be either useful or idle — but neither true nor false.

Scientific Propositions

Scientific propositions, too, may be shown to be mere proposals which are generally and more or less useful for our comprehension of experience in particular areas, but which cannot be said to be descriptive of any antecedently existing reality and are thus neither true nor false in the strict sense. The number system used in science and its operational rules form a system of entities, which, as expressed, falls under a linguistic framework. Any question regarding it which is internal to the system can be easily understood and answered as a theoretical one. But this is not possible with respect to any question about it that is external to the system, and that cannot be theoretically framed at all.

Thus 'Five is a number' follows analytically from the arithmetical system, and any schoolboy will take this proposition as obviously true. But the ontological question whether there are in reality numbers such as five or six is not a theoretical but a pragmatic question, meaning whether the number system is a useful device and able to cope with a particular area of experience.[2] As stated before, the practical value of a conceptual device is no mark of its reality for the simple reason that a bettter device may be found later on, and that there is no single all-pervasive field of experience where any particular system of ideas is indispensable. Carnap holds the internal questions to be theoretical, for they can be formulated and answered by means of the rules of the system, but, as Morton White has shown, the rules of the system, and therefore the definitions, are ultimately devised to cope systematically with the particular area of investigation with particular aims and attitudes; therefore, the question of their validity, too, is pragmatic rather than theoretical. In any case, ontology with regard to them is out of the question.

With regard to such scientific judgments as 'There are electrons' or 'There are gravitational forces', we have the same pragmatic approach. These abstract entities are accepted as part of a system of ideas found useful in comprehending a particular field of enquiry. By the existence or reality of these entities the scientist means nothing beyond this : that they are parts of an accepted system. When one poses the ontological question whether they really exist or not, one enquires about their unconditional acceptability. We see then that such a question has no clear cognitive significance and answer. The same holds for more concrete entities and laws of science whose validity rests on their efficiency as conceptual frameworks in a particular context of our experience and aims, and which therefore, are not ontologically significant. With regard to sense-data and elementary observations, which are regarded by some (e.g., Russell) to be the incorrigible basis of scientific knowledge, it is now well known that they are acceptable only in the context of a system of ideas or an antecedent theory. Only the private, unique and inexpressible sense-data are incorrigible, but they are useless for science. Sensible experiences and theoretical concepts mutually influence and modify one another, and neither of these two moments of knowledge, the empirical and the rational, is the sole and autonomous dictator of science. The sense-data (e.g., 'this red') are now abandoned by the scientific methodologists in favour of ordinary observations (e.g., 'this red stone') as the starting point of knowledge. Thus a physicalistic instead of a sense-data language is recognized as the empirical factor in scientific knowledge. However, these observation-statements, which confirm or refute scientific theories besides suggesting them, have no ontological import. That there is a red stone is a 'fact' only in the sense that the judgment stating it is accepted in the context of a system of ideas devised for a particular area of experience with a particular purpose in view. There is no question here of unconditional acceptance. Every case of acceptance of a judgment and its reference is provisional and contextual. The scientist is keenly aware of this tentative and shifting state of affairs in his knowledge situation. He experiences continual reorganization of scientific knowledge, and sometimes drastic revision of conceptual frameworks and the language of science. He does not know what there really is, he knows only the latest way things look to him who is ever adjusting his conceptual apparatus to get the simplest and most comprehensive view of his experiences. Since the experiences form an unpredictable factor and are to some extent selective, and since the ideas of simplicity and comprehensiveness themselves are to some extent evaluative, scientific knowledge cannot attain that ideal objectivity which we wish for it.

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[2] Shri Ramakrishna, when coming down from the state of *samādhi* used sometimes to try to count; but the numbers came out wrong : one, four, six, seven and so on.

Vedānta and Modern Science 10

Science arose as man, finding himself in a world alien to him, started to deal with his environment intelligently. At one stage of his life on this earth, he knew only a few things about nature—such as lighting fire, breeding a few useful animals, and growing corn. He was subject to changes of season and natural calamities like storms, floods, earthquakes and failure of crops; fierce animals preyed on him. His first response to such hostile conditions was magic. He thought like a child that if he drew on earth clouds and rain, and sprinkled water, then there would be real rain; if he performed dances imitating a harvest scene, there would be a good harvest. Magic was primitive science. It was a pathetic effort of man to deal with nature.

Magic was bound to fail, and the cleverest of the magicians took to observation of nature and experimentation for knowledge. This was a slow but effective means of coping with the situation. Science emerged from magic, and as it progressed there developed greater and greater faith in its method and in the outlook underlying it.

According to this outlook or philosophy of science, nature is "out there" on its own account, an independent, self-subsisting realm of matter in mechanical motion and, therefore, of blind force or energy. The various phenomena, like light, heat, electricity and sound are forms of matter in motion; and there are rigid laws of motion which govern the occurrences in the world. Preoccupation with such a world induced in man a belief that mechanical matter and energy form the basic reality, while consciousness and sense of freedom are illusory. Mind must be a by-product of matter, and we must be bound by rigid laws. This scientific outlook makes man an outsider and a poor, insignificant creature in a vast, indifferent world; and breeds in him fear and unrest and a desire to exploit nature for his security and pleasure.

The idealists have always pointed out the falsity of this materialistic philosophy, and its unhappy consequences in our life and society. While the scientist regards matter and blind laws as ultimate, the idealist points out that matter is but what it appears to the mind, and it cannot be conceived to be uncreated or self-subsistent. The laws must presuppose a law-maker, who may be a conscious spirit willing matter to behave in certain ways. The capacity of our mind to observe nature and to find laws in it reveals our affiliation to this creator-spirit. But this idealistic argument has not succeeded very much in the West, which has been increasingly given to the pursuit and worship of science.

Happily enough, certain findings in science itself have recently led some leading scientists to revise their earlier notion of the external world. Toward the end of the last century, a number of phenomena were discovered in quick succession which led to the view that matter was made of electricity. A little later it was found that some minute particles of matter could be transformed into electrical waves and waves back into particles. Thus matter may be said to be dematerialized. But there was a lingering ghost of matter in the form of what was called "ether," supposed to be a subtle all-pervading medium for the electrical waves into which matter had been reduced. Certain experiments in the early twentieth century, together with Einstein's very cogent theory of relativity, which explained many facts, led to the abandonment of this hypothesis of ether; so that ether was no longer considered a medium which undulates or in which the waves are formed. The waves are now recognized as mathematical expressions describing the modes of movements of phenomena themselves, and not of any abstract unobservable matter. Mysterious matter, which had been thought to be the substance behind the appearance of things, became a myth. Recent science has come to talk of the observable data or the sensible appearances as the basic objects, the other entities being constructs or mental inventions that help the scientist to organize the data.

Matter therefore ceased to be something "out there," beyond and behind the sensible appearances. With respect to laws, it became increasingly apparent that there are no very rigid laws in the finer or submicroscopic levels, where only average or statistical laws operate; so that it is not impossible to conceive, for example, of water suddenly boiling off at ordinary temperature. There is a regularity, instead, of a strict necessity in natural phenomena. Moreover, laws may be subject to change. There is no law of unchangeability of laws. The scientist does not know why there are laws at all, or why there is regularity in nature. And he has not observed *all* nature and found it *all* regular.

Now, how can we comprehend this situation in new science? I submit that a philosophical vision of the world offered by Vedānta may be helpful here.

The world is all appearance, *māyā,* of names and forms. There is nothing ultimately real in it, no material substance. The appearances are in some cosmic mind that projects them for its sport (*līlā*), according to its own sweet will which becomes law. But for individual minds the appearances seem to be given or impressed from outside, and, so, we think of a material substance behind them. But we may as well think of our individual minds as freely assumed modes of cosmic mind, so that what the latter projects or creates in imagination appears to us as given. We are the dream-selves of the cosmic mind and we can, if we desire, awaken from this dream of life and realize the illusoriness of this world. This is liberation or passing into the cosmic consciousness.

This view explains why, though there are laws of nature, these laws are flexible and not rigid. An intelligent Spirit in projecting a world for his delight must follow some rules, but he is not bound by them. Rules are of his own making. So miracles are possible. The laws are neither blind nor rigid, such as inert matter has been conceived. There is no such thing. All is an expression of a cosmic artist. All is full of joy. That is what Vedānta tells us. The Upaniṣad says: "Whatever is revealed is a form of His joy, His immortality." Again, "The aesthetic delight (*rasa*) is the character of the Highest Spirit."

Therefore nature must not be treated as strange and hostile, since only our cleverness is required to harness it to our selfish ends. Nor must nature be regarded with undue fondness as our permanent home. It is, after all, *māyā* or dream-like; and our business is to seek our own true Spirit, the cosmic mind behind nature and our individual minds. We may have scientific knowledge and technology, but these activities should impress upon us our essential kinship with the author of nature. Science, if pursued in the right manner, will lead us to the recognition of the proper place of nature in reality; neither too high nor too low. A reflection on science will point to us the true character of things and, so, our higher task of Self-realization. The quest cannot stop with finding the items in nature and their laws, but must pass on to the source or ground of all these. Nothing but the Infinite can give us complete satisfaction and rest.

Physical Indeterminism in The Light of Vedānta

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The principle of Indeterminacy, formulated by Heisenberg in 1927, is recognized to be a great achievement in new physics. According to it, the mechanical state of a micro-entity such as an electron cannot be known with absolute accuracy. This state is constituted by its position and momentum, and an increase in the accuracy of one of these quantities leads to a decrease in the other. Thus the product of the two inaccuracies remains never less than a constant quantity called 'Planck's Constant'. Now since the state of an electron at a particular moment cannot be ascertained absolutely, its state at a future moment remains hazy, so that strict predictability becomes impossible. This impossibility, it must be noted, is not subjective or remediable, but it is inherent in the nature of things. Thus causality, in the restricted sense of predictability, does not hold in the case of individual micro-entities. Causality, in the broad sense as the law that nothing happens without *some* cause, is not affected by Heisenberg's principle which offers a basis for calculation of probabilities and which, therefore, does not entail a principle of chaos. Moreover, its field is restricted to individual micro-entities; in the case of these entities in large numbers or of macro-bodies, there is no indeterminacy, for the probability of a future state, calculated on the basis of Heisenberg's formula, comes out to be a certainty. We have thus determinism in the macro-world, while indeterminism in the micro-world. To avoid the difficulty of conceiving two kinds of laws in the physical world, determinism may be regarded as the limit of indeterminism (but not of chaos or perfect freedom) and the more fundamental law of nature, so that a little loose-jointedness or haziness in the finest parts of matter has to be admitted.

Now let us see how this view touches the question of human free will. Those in the West who tried to prove free will on the basis of physical indeterminism failed because of two main defects in their views. Firstly, they had no adequate conception of the freedom of the will. Secondly, they could not show how the free will can express itself through the bodily acts which, being macro-entities, cannot have any freedom. Because of the failure of many scientific philosophers, such as Jeans and Eddington, to show how physical indeterminism really helps the theroy of free will, these attempts have generally fallen into disrepute. We shall, however, make an attempt of our own.

Free will is, for us, following Vedānta and Kant, pure autonomous will that transcends all self-interest, passions and inclinations. So our feeling of freedom, while we are engaged in some interest or passion, is, like that of a drunkard, delusive and is no indication of our true freedom. In our lucid moments we find our so-called freedom to be but bondage. In all such cases of display of freedom our actions follow the determinism of our physical system and environment, and the inclinations spring from some bodily want and seek satisfaction in some outer object. A life of free enjoyment of passions is but a life in bondage. Many Western philosophers , e.g. Max Planck and L. Susan Stebbing who have dealt with this problem of free will in the context of new physics, have ignored this fundamental notion of human free will. They have taken a 'sense' of freedom for real freedom.[1]

However, our problem now is to see how we can be really free when the physical system we bear follows strict determinism. Here we have to conceive, in the higher centre of our brain, a region where the physical effects of our volitions start and from where they are propagated to the nerves and muscles which translate our volitions into actions. In this region there may be a gap in the nerve circuits, between the receptors on the one side and effectors on the other. This gap may be filled in by a small group of micro-entities which act as connectors of neuron ends. Now these micro-entities must be allowed Heisenberg's indeterminacy, as their movements are not strictly determined by their surroundings, so that they may be influenced by free will and may act as movable switches between the receptors and the effectors. Thus free will can guide them according to its own judgment. The regulation of these micro-switches and neuron connections will be truly rational and so the consequent actions will be really free. In the case of unfree actions the micro-entities, acting as switches, follow the probability laws of bodily inclinations which are more or less mechanical (though appearing as free), arising from our physical basis of life. Whatever goes on in our psycho-physical system is law-bound. But the free will is transcendental and acts upon the indeterminate portion of the behaviour of the micro-entities in the higher centres of the brain, and through them moves the macro bodies like nerves and muscles. Thus the diffculty of conceiving how macro-bodies, involved in our actions, can be affected by free will may be got over. Of course this only means that we can conceive how macro-bodies, which Heisenberg's principle does not affect, and are law-bound, can be made to follow our free will.

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[1] See Planck's *Where is Science Going?* (1933), p. 156. And see Stebbing's *Philosophy and the Physicists* (1937), p 241.

This does not mean that we have solved the problem of mind (consciousness)and matter, and the problem of how free will can at all act on any material body, e. g. a micro-entity in the brain. But as to this problem we maintain that there must be some meeting ground between consciousness and matter, for the two cannot be different in every respect as the interaction of the two is a fact. It is inconceivable that a man is allowed to think freely while he can say only what the laws of physics ordain. That consciousness is free and that it knows and acts on matter is a fact we have assumed here. What we have sought to show here is how causality-bound matter can behave freely. And this we have done with the help of two things:

(i) A hypothetical picture of the mechanism of neuron connections in the higher centres of the brain, the connecting links being a small group of movable micro-entities; (ii) Heisenberg's principle of Indeterminacy, applying it to these micro-entities. We have thus taken advantage of the result of the Indeterminacy principle that matter, in its finest state, is neither wholly law-bound nor quite lawless but has a small margin of latitude.

This is one implication of the Indeterminacy principle in philosophy. There is another. Some physicists and philosophers (e.g. Schrödinger and Cassirer), seeing the difficulty of conceiving a particle having no well-defined state, have advocated rejection of the particle concept of matter. They have replaced the particle by a diffused state called 'wave' which has no definite space-time location. As a result of this, matter is to be regarded as constituted of patterned activity or energy-pulse which unifies in itself structure and function, matter and motion, space and time. Space and time cease to be independent containers of matter and so the problem of their relation with matter and between themselves is got over. The problem of infinite space and time also do not baffle us any more, for space and time become only logically prior to matter but not ontologically, and they become finite, though boundless, being but interwoven with material nature. It is vain to imagine space and time extending where there is no matter; space and time are no entities given apart from matter but are aspects of matter. In a word, physical nature is to be conceived as a play of patterned activity or dance, with no permanent material substratum or background (in the form of space, time, or ether). It is all change and multiplicity, with no substance that may be said to change and multiply. This view is logically more satisfactory, for if something changes we cannot define this 'something' while if it is 'anything' then it does not change. If we bring in some prime-stuff, either a continuous one or a discrete one, which remains identical during change which may then be declared superficial, we create but fresh problems. For the nature of this basic stuff is to be clarified. A change in the arrangement of ultimate particles or in the continuous medium has to be imagined in order to explain change in gross matter. But this fromer change is to be explained with refernce to some other more permanent substance. Thus we land ourselves in an infinite regress. The Greek atomists and the nineteenth century ether-theorists naively took space and time to be permanent receptacles of matter and explained change with reference to these. But thereby they created insoluble problems. Modern physics, with its amalgamation of space, time and matter into one concept of 'wave' (on no medium) or patterned activity has rescued thought from its vain search after chimerical substance or prime-stuff.

Thus the physical world is but flux with no physical foundation of its own. Yet it must have a foundation, for a change is known only with respect to something unchanging. The physical world is not self-contained but must be dependent on some other self-subsisting object which, as we have seen, cannot be 'physical'. This self-subsisting object must be something *metaphysical* and known immediately with refernce to Self-consciousness in a metaphysical contemplation. It is, in fact, Self-consciousness working through our empirical mind that demands a self-subsistent object behind the physical things found empirically to be flux. The search for substance is vain for science, for there is no way from facts to the self-subsistent object. But it is a demand of the self that directly posits it and believes it to be its necessary correlate. So substance is a necessity for metaphysics which does not question its rightful place. Metaphysical contemplation is not like science speculation and hypotheses-framing. But it is nothing if not explication of self-revealed and believed truths. So the search in the inductive disciplines for a substrate of the physical universe is consummated in a discovery of it in a deductive or transcendental metaphysics.

But there the problem is not entirely solved. For the self, while contemplating on the self-subsistent object as the basis of the factual world of flux, is also disturbed by the questions, 'Why an object at all? Why a correlate?' The self, in such an attitude which is metaphysical, realizes its ultimate transcendental nature in which there is no subject-object duality, and no knowledge of the 'other'. In this state , the self is without a 'second', for the latter is realized as a projection (*mayā*), and there is no problem of the object either as a self-subsistent metaphysical one or as a physical substance. For the self, then, the object is illusory and so does not present a real problem. This Vedāntic view is a matter for realization (*siddhi*) through practice (*sādhanā*) and not for speculation. Judged rationally as a speculative philosophy, its basic presuppositions are ultimate mysteries. These are the several grades of Reality corresponding to the different levels of Self-consciousness, the highest level being the essential and the lower ones accidental and assumed playfully. Thus we have the world of dreams and illlusions, of empirical waking experience, of metapysical contemplation, and of ultimate transcendental objectless Self-consciousness. Each lower one is an appearance to the higher and poses problems that lead to the latter. Any question which starts at the empirical plane can only attain its final solution in the transcendental Self 'knowing which one knows everything' (*Çhāndogya Up*). The Self must be conceived as *in and above* difference. 'Pervading the whole of the universe, He exceeds it by the measure of ten fingers' (Ṛgveda). A lower plane of Reality is sublated as its higher one appears, yielding the higher truth about the lower. The sun, the moon, and all the phenomena of Nature can be known ultimately as the Spirit that is our own Self; only in such knowledge can any problem be solved without remainder. 'I am what He (the person in the sun) is' (*Īśā Up.*), 'That thou art' (*Çhāndogya Up.*) – these are demands for transcension of the seeming and entry into the real.

However, we may leave the matter at that. Our purpose has been to show how the philosophical consequences of the Indeterminacy principle in physics are in accord with Vedānta metaphysics. The Vedāntic conception of free will and matter can help us correctly to understand and appreciate the wider implications of Heisenberg's principle.

Vedānta and Scientific Empiricism

12

The neo-empiricism of modern scientific philosophers tends to lead them to a Vedāntic position. Though they openly declare their movement as a method of science instead of metaphysics, we can as well see the faith that underlies this method and that gets strengthened with the success of the latter. This is the faith that nothing but bare sense-impressions are given to us, all else is our own construction. Thus with regard to the so-called categories or *a priori* principles of knowledge, such as space, time, causality and substance, they are regarded as convenient presumptions or procedural rules for the correlation of sense-data. As such they are neither fixed nor to be hypostatized into realities, so that with the development of science we may have many different formulations of these concepts. We have already other ideas of space and time in modern physics than we had before and causality for the scientist now means a highly probable correlation while substance means constancy in the relations of different measured quantities. Thus while Kant established the world of scientific understanding on a firm basis provided by the system of categories, modern scientific empiricism knocks out this basis, with the result that it conceives a world that is provisional, having many alternative orders. Thus "conventionalism," first spoken of by Poincare with regard to scientific theories, rules in its broadest sense in new science, Einstein himself having been one of its modern exponents. Thinkers like Herbert Dingle and C. I. Lewis, have voiced this philosophy of relativism with respect to conceptual structures of science. Some even talk of alternative logics. The idea that Aristotelian logic is the only logic reflecting the structure of reality is suspected. Again, the notion that crucial experiments will decide between rival scientific theories has been abandoned and alternative theories are accepted in principle. Thus there is the dual theory of light, and to talk of light as an identical substance having one unique nature and law of behaviour is held to be a prejudice.

This empirical attitude of modern science leads it to consider unobservable mycrophysical entities like electrons, atoms and molecules, to be not inferred ones but constructs, models or analogues. They are just conceptual tools. Some call them "vehicles of mathematical formulae", others "interphenomena", but none confuses them with real objects. Again, a natural law is regarded as a maxim for expecting certain correlations and so as an aid to human practice. Thus "man is mortal" simply means that if you meet a man, expect him to die at one time or another. "Unsupported bodies must fall to the ground" means that *provided* that the law of gravitation holds and many other unspecified conditions are fulfilled in case of an unsupported body, it must fall. This means that a natural law does not state a general proposition describing something about *all* objects of a particular kind (men or bodies) and it does not signify any real necessity anywhere either in nature or in our knowledge of it. A general proposition does not state anything real literally; it is a model or rule for making particular ones which alone are referential. A rule is found from past observation of regularities and, therefore, is provisional. As a maxim for our practice it is neither true nor false but only less or more reliable and useful. Thus though the modern scientific empiricist believes as a scientist in some kind of order in the world, he believes neither in the necessity nor in the fixity of this order. There may be many orders at once and these may change or even degenerate into chaos.

Now this is a sufficient sign that the scientist is working towards a view that the world is a matter of name and form (*nāma-rūpa*). He admits that man's mind plays a part in shaping the world. But he is not a complete idealist as yet. He believes in the "hard data", the sense-impressions, that are objective for him and that are stated by what he calls "basic propositions". These sense-impressions are the basic constituents of the world and since they have certain common characteristics and they also behave in certain orders and not quite haphazardly, we can build up a systematic phenomenal world out of them. Our understanding, the scientist believes with Kant, builds nature but does not create it, though he does not believe that this understanding works with fixed categories building a self-same world for all times. The understanding has a freedom in construction but it gets its materials from outside. But exactly here Kant and the modern empiricists are in difficulties. If the materials come from outside the mind, how can the mind put them into any sort of order it pleases? This has led some scientists to realism and therefore to the belief that it is after all facts that uniquely determine our conceptual structures. The mind can but seek the form inherent in the sensible material of our knowledge, it cannot fashion them, and therefore, all talk of conventionalism is nonsense. We may imagine any hypothesis, but only that which uniquely and completely fits in with the facts is true. However, this realistic attitude must be given up in view of the impossibility of verifying a hypothesis (which can only be *confirmed* in a greater or lesser degree) and deciding amongst rival hypotheses. The alternative to this old-fashioned realism is idealism that recognizes no hard data or materials given from outside. If we can detect an element of convention in the order or form of the world, we can easily push this analogy further and think the so-called hard data to be soft. That is to say, instead of thinking with the realist that there is a fixed world out there which our mind has to reflect faithfully, we may as well think with the idealist that our mind projects a multiple world and of this process it gradually becomes reflectively aware. This would solve the problem of application of mind's ordering activity on the materials ordered. Thus the mind creates the world which it yet apparently seeks to discover. But this contradiction has to be removed to make the idealistic view fully acceptable.

Now this contradiction can be understood if we see it in the light of the Vedāntic concept of *māyā* and *līlā*. The mind projects a multiple world (in fact as many as there are individual persons) with various likenesses and inter-relations, but it does this only while it dreams, so that to its dream-selves all these projections appear to be given realities. Our ordinary waking mind is a dream-state of our original subliminal mind which is sleeping, and the progressive awareness on the part of the scientists and philosophers of the mind's contribution to the appearance of the world means gradual waking of this mind and dissolution of its magnificent dream. The enquiry, therefore, as to how much of nature is given to us and how much is of our own making, is symptomatic of a process of come-back from a dream state. Naive realism is the sign of sound dreaming while any questioning about the objectivity of any part of the world is a mark of self-awareness of the dreaming mind. The scientist of our times is a realist so far as he still believes in the "givenness" of the sense-data which he seeks to record and correlate, but he also believes that he has much freedom in correlating and, therefore, constructing an over-all picture of the phenomenal world. A further reflection upon his faith would reveal to him the incompatibility of his freedom of construction with the compulsion of recording given data. This he can, and will in future, solve by an idealistic view of the matter such as we have indicated here. When the intellectual conviction that the world is a creation of our real mind is complete in any one of us, the world will appear as a dream for him. This awareness of a dream as such is a peculiar state of non-attachment to the dream-world which is then enjoyed for its own sake. This is the state enjoyed by the saints who get a kind of liberation while alive (*jīvanmukti*). In that state they are more or less at one with the subliminal mind that dreams and projects the world, and therefore, they can perform miracles and possess such other extraordinary powers as thought-reading, telepathy, hypnotism, etc. They enjoy the delusion of others, knowing everything to be but a make-believe affair. On their death these saints lose themselves in the foundational mind and so have complete liberation from the world. This is *videhamukti*. Our transcendental mind thus becomes aware of itself as dreaming through the self-reflection of scientist-philosophers and saints who question the apparent objectivity of the world and enquire into the very problem of empirical knowledge. This latter kind of knowledge is found to be made possible because of an original affinity between the knowing mind with the known objects which are the projections of the transcendental mind behind the phenomenal one. Knowledge of the secret of empirical knowledge is thus real knowledge, *vidyā*, while the empirical one of science and commonsense is *avidyā*. However, through reflection upon this *avidyā* one can reach *vidyā* and they are equally valuable for the cosmic spiritual sport, *līlā*. This is sweet self-losing into a magnificent dream, where the one spirit appears to itself to be many and experiencing variety of objects and feelings, and followed by a self-recollection and enjoyment of the dream as such, and then waking from it. The various movements in science and philosophy are but so many moves within the cosmic sport, some—the realistic ones—helping the spirit to dream more unself-consciously while the critical and idealistic ones help to wake it up. And we can see that the modern empirical ways of thinking in science and philosophy logically point in the direction of self-recollection of the spirit and its liberation from the dream of life. Therefore, if rightly interpreted and consistently worked out, this movement is helpful to the religious culture of man. For religion is essentially a home-coming of the spirit of man, an awakening from the blind dreaming of and suffering from sensible and affective experiences of this world. The cosmic spirit enjoys from behind the self-recognitive movements of the religious souls as well as of the delusive and worldly ones. It is one in and above many, and it is joyful in and above the joys of self-losing and self-finding. Such is the paradoxical conception of the spirit or Brahman. It may be somewhat understood by means of the analogy of our mind in a creative mood when it constructs in imagination and lives in a way many lives at once and enjoys the self-delusion as well as awaking from it. Only through such partial analogies can we hope to grasp and communicate, howsoever faintly, the metaphysical truths which have to be experienced in order to comprehend them fully. A rational discussion of them only prepares the mind for the disciplines (*sādhanā*) which alone will give the final results, and therefore, justify our intellectual efforts.

A Scientific Approach to Vedānta

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The purpose of this paper is to bring out the philosophical outlook of modern science by examining some of its methodological developments and important results, and to develop this outlook in the spirit of science. The outcome of this study will be a philosophical view which may be called scientific in the sense of being a speculative extension of science and not of being precise, complete, or absolutely certain. In fact the popular connotation of the adjective 'scientific' is very much mistaken, for science is admittedly incomplete and probabilistic, and, though it aims at as much precision as can possibly be achieved in any given area of investigation, it actually fails to reach its ideal and there are areas where it has to content itself with very rough qualitative results. All this follows from the very complex nature of the world of our experience that defies a simple and exhaustive analysis or systematization, where the more we seek details the greater is the vagueness and uncertainty, and where we cannot be sure that the vast number of unobserved cases will in future behave like the observed cases. The method of science being inductive, based ultimately on our experience of a limited number of instances, the scientist cannot be certain of his results. Even if we assume uniformity of nature we cannot guarantee the truth of a generalization or a hypothesis in science, for how can we know that we have not been deceived by a mere accidental regularity and that a better hypothesis might not be there to take care of the facts. It is quite possible, and often seen in the history of science, that with the discovery of fresh facts older hypotheses are modified and even replaced by newer ones that have more systematic import and empirical confirmation. So that a scientific approach is marked by hypotheticism and probabilism, in other words, by a tough-minded acceptance of the partial and tentative nature of our knowledge of things. As Russell says, the uncertainty of knowledge is a doctrine that inspires science and scientific philosophy.

We generally mean by a scientific approach one in harmony with the spirit of science as described above, and particularly one which uses modern science as its spring-board and point of departure. Because of this approach we will not speak of our notion of reality as ontological, that is to say, as signifying what really exists, for every existential statement is conditioned by many other statements and its truth is never unconditional. How can we ever tell that what we see or think to be existing, whehter it be this obvious perceptual world or any ideal one, is really or absolutely existing and will not prove a passing appearance in the light of subsequent experience? This is a deontological standpoint and a consequence of the empirical attitude that cannot make any sense of necessary or absolute existence. Whatever appears to exist must be just a matter of fact and not of logic, and we can very well think of its non-existence. Facts are given; they are just 'brute facts', and, as such, contingent upon and opaque to reason.

Following the method of science, we will posit an entity as the highest principle and think of a process by means of which it may be said to give rise to and explain the world. All this will be hypothetical and imagined on the analogy of our given experience, and the only argument for our adopting such an entity and its working will be their adequacy in dealing with the facts to be systematized and explained. And, if we at all believe in the existence of this entity in any sense, we will systematize and explain it on the hypothetical principle that there are different levels of existence, and what is experienced at one level may have its analogue on another level. It is under this condition that one believes in the existence of the micro-physical entities of modern physics which are empirically imperceptible, but are logically not so, for one can conceive them to exist on the analogy of perceptible particles.

Now this hypothetical entity reached scientifically by us will be a cosmic spirit and the latter will be imagined to operate after the manner of our dreaming in order to explain the world and our knowledge of it. These notions together with their implications will make the system very much like that of non-dualistic Vedānta. So that we may call this study ' a scientific reconstruction of Vedānta'. The chief difference will be seen to lie in this. Vedānta offers the concept of the cosmic spirit and its action on the basis of the revelation recorded in the Upaniṣads, and advances some arguments of an analogical kind to enable us to have some initial intellectual sympathy with these notions. It rests for its truth on revelation and asks us to verify it by our own mystical experience. But our present approach being scientific, we cannot ask anyone to believe in the testimony of the Upaniṣads nor can we speak of any extraordinary faculty which can validate their metaphysical assertions. We can only posit the idea of the cosmic spirit as a significant hypothesis to explain certain features of our experience of this world. However, we do not dogmatically deny the possibility of extraordinary faculties of the mind, and, consequently, of a direct knowledge of metaphysical objects. A scientist keeps an open mind and will readily admit a supra-mind and the cosmic spirit as facts if he comes across sufficient evidence to support them. Just as he seeks to verify, by means of instruments like the microscope and telescope, perceptible objects like germs and heavenly bodies which were at first postulated to explain certian observed phenomena, in the same manner he should be prepared to follow the instructions of *yoga* that claims to develop a super-sense and to lead by its means to a direct knowledge of the cosmic spirit. This will be the practical side of a scientific philosophy, its speculative side is what we are concerned with at present.

Space, Time and Matter

The new concept of space and time introduced by Einstein replaced the Newtonian ideas regarding them which made space and time absolute and infinite receptacles for events. According to the new theory they are conceptual frameworks that help us most adequately to organize observable phenomena. Space is now conceived to be closed or curved, it is finite though boundless; to be imagined by relating it to its two dimensional analogue, the surface of a sphere. This space is welded with time and matter so that the new concept of space-time-matter explains the mechanics of the universe more simply and consistently than the old separate concepts of space, time and matter, and avoids the problems and paradoxes associated with the infinity of space and time and their relation to matter. But what is more important for our purpose here is to see that it is in modern physics that we have come to take space and time as our constructs which can be modified to fit our experience. Kant spoke of space and time as modes of perception but he did not speak of them as free constructs or postulates. He thought they were necessary features of phenomena. Modern physics has relativized the categories of Kant, treating them as our conceptual frameworks devised to meet the ever-growing challenge of experience. We are free to revise them. The mind thus contributes to knowledge which is, therefore, not absolute and objective but provisional and relative.

The status of matter too has undergone a sea change. The older notion of matter as something constant and rigid has had to be given up in the face of new findings. Matter is now found to be a form of energy : we can transform mass into electro-magnetic rays and vice versa, but we cannot say whether the total matter-energy of the world remains constant, for there is some evidence that matter is disappearing on the one hand and appearing on the other, but we cannot tell whether a balance is being maintained. Anyhow, we find that our conception of matter may more usefully be replaced by that of events or perceptual occasions, for matter is our construct which we can give up if we find it unhelpful in science. Events are what we actually meet in experience. The material substance that is thought to be the core or primary stuff of perceptible qualities has been given up as a scientific entity, whether as a particle or wave; it is now retained only as persisting illusion caused by our ordinay language that must speak in a subject-predicate mode. We say, ' It is such and such' and feel that, apart from the qualities 'such and such' that define the object, there must be something corresponding to ' it' that holds them together. But our ordinary way of speaking and thinking cannot always determine our philosophy. Science has come to treat material substance as a ghost. We have only the perceptual data and their regular co-existences and successions giving rise to determinate physical objects with difinite properties.

Relations of co-existence and suggession

We now come to consider the relations that are found to exist amongst the perceptual data. These were regarded as necessary or absolutely binding by the rationalists. But, as Hume showed, this is just a matter of our custom and habit or psychological fixation, we have no reason to believe that they will necessarily hold. For necessity is either logical or psychological. The relations in question cannot be logical for we can conceive of their failure to hold, and they cannot be psychological for we cannot conceive nature as a conscious being having alternative courses before her but compelled to choose only one course and so behave in a certain way and not in another. The relations only *appear* to be necessary because we expect them to hold uniformity. But Hume and the empiricists could not explain why, in fact, we have such marvellous regularity in natural phenomena, and why our expectations are so uniformly fulfilled. Science too cannot and need not speak of these laws of co-existence and succession as necessary, it only searches for them and finds them and expects them to hold good in future. But, as it is inductive in method, science cannot tell whether nature everywhere is law-abiding. Science can do its job if *some* phenomena show regularity. Recent research in physics has found some loose-jointedness in the micro-physical realm: it can only speak of the probability of an electron being at some place, so that if we do not find an electron at that place, even if the probability of its being there may be very high, the statement about its position is not falsified. Yet this recent development in physics assumes some average regularity in the micro-world and any critical-minded physicist will ask the question— why does nature show such a regularity ?

This metaphysical question is of a second order — arising out of the first-order questions regarding particular regularities. Kant considered the general rule of regularity to be necessary, as without it our knowledge would be impossible, but he did not ask himself the question— why should knowledge be necessary ? We see that knowledge might be absent, the phenomena could be haphazard. Further, a thorough-going operation of the rule in every detail is not logically necessary for the probability of our scientific knowledge which, as we said above, requires that *some* phenomena should show *some* regular feature. So that the question— why should some phenomena be at all regular — was raised neither by Hume nor by Kant, and a scientist as such has no business to raise it. But it is a question that naturally rises in the scientific mind that deals with natural laws, for such a scientist finds his laws to be not necessary, and yet they are there.

Cause of regularity and order in nature

Now a scientific answer to this question will be in terms of a hypothesis which has to be intelligible because of its analogy with our experience, and which has to be as simple and adequate as possible. We have to search for a suitable model to account for the regularity and order we find in nature. Regularity and order, like spatiality and temporality, are ideas by means of which the mind understands the brute fact, the given fact, the phenomena. These ideas are mental and yet we feel that they are not subjective in the sense that they are universal and apply to nature. This means they are ideas in some universal mind which we share as we come to realize them. But two questions raise their heads immediately, one respecting the relation of this universal mind to the phenomena, and the other, respecting its relation to the individual mind.

The phenomena, to be ordered by the universal mind under its ideas, must themselves belong to the mind, for how can a mind order alien objects? We have in our experience, our imagination producing images and ordering them according to its wishes, and we can conceive a universal mind projecting and ordering the phenomenal world after this model. As to the second question respecting the relation of the universal mind to our individual minds, we can imagine this as being similar to the action of a hypnotist on a patient who perceives and thinks as the former wants him to. We can imagine a universal hypnotist holding us under a hypnotic spell and making us perceive things, intersubjectively and intersensually, in a regular manner. This regularity has two aspects. One relates to the correlation of objects sensed with our bodily positions and the conditions of our sense-organs, nervous system and physical states, while the other relates to the correlation of these objects with other sensible objects. The former kind of regularity leads us to think that our bodies and physical states (e.g. attention and memory) play a causal role in perception, but we forget that these are themselves objects of perception. The second produces the ideas that objects are given to us for we cannot control their order. In fact, we distinguish natural objects from our imaginary ones—such as we have in our dreams and fantasies—by the objective order that we find in the former. This order is the *test* of truth or reality of sensible objects, but the *meaning* of truth or reality is constituted by their being given to us from some external source. This source must be a conscious and intelligent one for how else can it influence our minds and produce perceptual objects in such marvellous patterns ? The givenness of the order as well as the objects themselves is experienced, but the agent to explain it is a matter of conjecture or analogical thinking.

Therefore, the objects and the order are all in the universal mind as imaginary objects, and their particular orders are in any individual mind. The hypnotic effect of the former mind consists in making us perceive things in the manner it pleases. It causes systematic hallucinations in our minds and this explains the regularity and order in nature which exists in this universal mind. This is what Berkeley taught us. This explains our knowledge, or systemitc experience of nature. This universal mind may be called God who shadows forth this world in our minds and puts some order in it so that we may live in it and learn to expect from the observation of certain things, certain results and thus gain knowledge and power over nature. Viewed religiously, we feel reverence for God as He makes our life possible and so rich in variety. Nature becomes the language of God besides being a home for us. Science, without this sort of philosophical development, makes nature opaque and alien to us.

Some parallel views offered by modern scientists

The views of James Jeans, Sir Arthur Eddington and Albert Einstein may be noted in this connection. They also reached a similar conclusion following similar considerations. Jeans argued that modern physics is now mathematical and mathematics is, *a priori*, not an inductive science; so a super-mathematical mind, God, must be the creator of this world. But his argument proves only that God must be a mathematical designer and not a creator. We can, however, supplement his argument by stating that since a designer cannot design unless the material he works upon is as pliable as his own imaginary creations, the world must be conceived to be God's imagination. Eddington argues that sensible objects are produced by the mind out of the meagre messages from a non-sensible world by means of our *a priori* ideas. The scientific objects are also our constructs out of other sensible objects; so that the world of sense and science is raised on a substratum we do not know. But what can this be but our own immediate consciousness which is the only reality we know for certain? Eddington is not clear whether this consciousness is one's individual consciousness or some universal one. One's mind may contribute much to one's knowledge of the world, but the world is not one's creation. Kant saw the point when he declared that the mind makes nature but does not create it. Eddington confused the world of physics with the physical world and he did not see that a symbol must have an object which it symbolizes. So he fell into a subjectivist position and spoke of the world as symbolized and mind-made. He should have considered the aspect of givenness of sensible things and their intersubjectivity, and then posited an external source, of course a mental one, of our sensible experience and, therefore, ultimately of our world of physics.

Einstein believes that our concepts in science are our free creations and yet they apply to the given world that is extra-mental. This situation leads him to speak of some 'pre-established harmony' between the mind and the world. Einstein did not develop his thought further. Had he done so he might have come very near our own answer given above, to the situation which, he rightly observed, made him feel religious.

The value and limitations of this solution

The solution that we have advanced in terms of the cosmic mind imagining the world, is valuable from a scientific point of view in so far as it explains the non-necessary character of the laws of nature and the elements of the contingency, loose-jointedness, admitted in modern physics, also the spontaneity and purposiveness admitted in the biological and psychological sciences. The so-called laws of nature being willed by a free cosmic spirit may very well be understood to be regular yet neither strict nor rigid. Again, the sensible world, being but ideas in the cosmic mind, has no material substance at its core and no absolute space and time as receptacles for the material things. Thus our theory is supported by and explains some of the basic tenets of modern science.

This cosmic mind cannot be imagined more definitely as possessing the characters, mathematical, artistic, or moral, that different thinkers attribute to it. For this mind cannot itself be determined by any of the characters it creates. Again this cosmic mind cannot be in space and time which are its creations. We see things as extensive and successive, the cosmic mind sees them in one aspect. The world is to be viewed as an expression of a supra-mental will in the medium of our minds.

But the difficulties of this theory become apparent at this point. How can the cosmic mind act upon our minds from outside ? The analogy of hypnotism goes some length towards answering this question but it falls short of complete satisfaction. The mind of the hypnotized person must be conceived in some manner to be continuous with the mind of the hypnotizer, otherwise the action of the latter on the former remains a mystery. Our individual minds must be sharing some common mental continuum ; we must be somehow inside the cosmic mind. How else can telepathy and hypnotism be accounted for ?

Thus we have to revise our ideas a bit. We have to conceive our individual minds as modes of the cosmic mind just as our dream-mind is a mode of our waking one. This analogy of hypnotism or telepathic communication has to be replaced by that of auto-suggestion found in dreams and imaginative recreations. We have first to note the sort of experience we have in the latter situation. We then have two minds, so to say ; one mind causes certain perceptions in the other which takes them as given realities, while the former mind enjoys them from behind. The dream-mind suffers the joys and sorrow blindly, but the waking-mind, that causes them, actively enjoys them for their sheer energy and variety. That this active mind is really working from behind may be founded on circumstantial evidence, for, from whence can we think the images appear if not from our own minds? We can also detect in the images and emotional associations they carry, our own wishes and desires that do not find any expression or fulfilment in our actual life. The bad dreams we suffer also satisfy our waking self that sometimes loves to have a taste of disagreeable things. We want happiness, no doubt, but we also want diversity that intensifies our consciousness and gives a sharp taste to our life. Much disagreeable dreaming is, however, just a continuation of our apprehensions in our waking life. We undergo them in order to know what they are like—so that we may take care to avoid them in actual life. But we do desire painful experiences for their own sakes too, and this is borne out by our love and enjoyment of suffering depicted in art, particularly by our delight in tragedy.

If we are convinced about this dual mind we can conceive, by analogy, that our waking minds are modes of one cosmic mind. The latter is then not external or transcendent but immanent, and we can imagine how the world that we perceive may be impressed on our minds by the cosmic mind. This postulate of an immanent Overmind, or God, will explain and be supported by the assertions of the mystics who speak of the essential identity of the human mind with the cosmic one. The Upaniṣads speak of it ('That thou art'), the Christian mystics, Eckhart, Ruysbroeck, St. Bernard and others, and the Islamic mystics called Sufis, affirm their experience of their oneness with some indeterminate cosmic spirit. But we must be careful here not to treat mystical experiences as a conclusive proof of our theory which must be held as, at best, a plausible hypothesis. For one must not dogmatically believe that the mystics have touched the bottom of experience, that fresh evidence will not turn up to demand a revision of our present hypothesis.

The new outlook in science and philosophy

This theory of the cosmic mind explains amongst other things the new outlook of science which no longer searches after any external substance or primary stuff of the world, and treats laws of co-existence, and the succession of phenomena, and spatio-temporality as but ideas having no permanency and necessity about them. This new approach to nature is interpreted, in our theory, as the scientific mind becoming more self-aware and, therefore, dimly conscious of the world being a projection or free creation of the cosmic mind, which is but human mind in its foundational aspect. The scientist's mind comes back to its own original state as it reflects on its discipline and he realizes that what appears to be given from ouside and necessary is but freely created by his own original self ; a self that enjoys this creation and at the same time assumes such a mode of self-oblivious passivity that it takes as a given reality that mode which it really creates. It takes with one hand what it creates with the other. Thus the development today of the scientific mind marks a stage in the return of the self-deluded spirit to its own. The philosophic mind, too, that has come to suspect and avoid a naive empirical realism and to recognize transcendental idealism, shows an awareness of the cosmic mind.

The world is regarded as somewhat mind-made ; not material and given to the mind. The individual mind is seen as a mode of the cosmic mind. We can also see how our aesthetic, moral and religious activities can be better understood in the light of this philosophy. In aesthetic contemplation we enjoy projecting our imaginary objects and emotions and treating them as if they are real, this make-believe or conscious self-delusion is the repetition, on an individual basis, of the similar activity of the cosmic mind on a universal plane. Aesthetic delight gives us a foretaste of the delight that we might have if we could identify ourselves with the cosmic spirit. The ancient Indian students of aesthetics spoke of the aesthetic delight as the 'very twin of the taste of Brahma' (*Brahmasvādasahodara*). As for morality, its essence is imaginative sympathy with others, and realizing a greater self than one's individual ego which is transcended. In this way moral progress means an increased self-awareness of the cosmic spirit that may be said to be coming into its own in the virtuous man. The morally advanced man takes a disinterested view of the world which has no hold over his passions and which appears as a stage where he plays his part; his actions spring from a motiveless desire to do his duty. Finally, one's religious experience consists in believing in a personal God as the creator and governor of the world and in establishing a kinship with Him. Therefore it involves one's rising from the state of total self-forgetfulness and passivity to one of partial self-awareness. We can thus see how our aesthetic, moral and religious realizations may be considered as marks of our spiritual awakening in greater or lesser degree, and now one can enhance one's awakening by reflecting on these experiences and bringing out the implications behind them. Man's spiritual progress means his increasing insight by virtue of which he realizes more and more clearly that that which he considered as external is, in fact, internal to him.

Unity in diversity: the theory and Vedānta

Just as our intellectual and other development may be treated, in our present theory, as marks of self-recollection of the cosmic spirit, so also retrogression, or a lowering of intellectual and other levels, must mean for us an increase in self-delusion or a degeneration of the cosmic spirit that sinks as a result into a state of passive dreaming. Since we can see in the world simultaneous progress and regress in spiritual matters, we are faced with the question— how can the same spirit at once rise from and fall into its dream state ? We have to admit then that the spirit enjoys both the movements, and seeks fulfilment of its dual desire through different modes of its consciousness. This cosmic spirit is thus protean and myriadminded. We can find a faint analogy to it in the personality of a powerful dramatic poet who may be living in imagination the diverse characters he is depicting in a drama. At that moment the poet has no self of his own. There is a similar kind of unity in the cosmic spirit and if we bear in mind that all variety and movements are in time and are adopted modes of the spirit, then the aspects of unity or identity of this spirit becomes more real and original than the expressions of it. The cosmic spirit itself is without any human character or analogy except imaginative creativity.

This makes us pause and ask a question on general method. How can an entity like this universal cosmic mind really help us in understanding the world if it is so bare of attributes and if it is consistent with everything we find in the world where it makes no difference ? There is nothing in our experience that can disprove our theory, which leads to the suspicion that the theory may be factually insignificant. Thus the positivists object to any metaphysical theory. What is the use of having an Absolute, they say, which is the common premise of all deductions to all factual statements ? If everything is there because ultimately there is the Absolute, the latter can be safely eliminated from our discourse. The Absolute leaves everything as it is. In reply, we may point out that a metaphysical theory, though it may be devised on the analogy of a hypothesis in science, serves a different purpose from the latter. A scientific hypothesis posits a definite physical object having definite consequences all of which may not be verifiable in experience, and so the hypothesis is, in principle, falsifiable. A metaphysical hypothesis, on the other hand, does not posit any one physical object amongst others but posits a principle which will not account for particular items of experience and will, therefore, not be disproved by them, but it will account for our experience and factuality as such. The positivists do not make any sense of this business of metaphysics as they do not ask the question—why should there be facts and why should we know them? We think it is a matter of being less or more responsive to the total situation we are in, and, from the standpoint of our own theory, we would say the positivists are not sufficiently awakened from the dream of life.

The metaphysical theory of ours is surely consistent with everything that may happen in our experience, and, therefore, it is neither true nor false in the ordinary sense, but it is not insignificant or worthless for that reason. This is because it offers us a principle in the light of which we can see and react to our experience in a particular way. It gives us a vision of the world and our life in it, which vision has its individual character. Though it leaves all the facts of the world as they are, it makes a vast difference to our attitude to them. There are alternative metaphysical theories which are raised on the same factual basis but which give different views of the facts. The acceptance of a metaphysical theory depends not so much on any arguments, for every theory squares itself with all the possible facts, but on the personal factors of a particular thinker for whom it means a total organization of his aims and attitudes of life. In this sense a metaphysical theory such as ours is more significant than any scientific theory.

We can readily see that our theory is much like non-dualistic Vedānta which speaks of an Absolute Spirit as the ground of all things. This spirit is said to be without any determinate character we find in our experience; it is characterized as eternal, pure, intelligent and blissful, but these predicates have to be taken in there transcendent and not ordinary sense. The spirit is to be known through negating every characteristic that we find in the text "*neti neti*". This Spirit is our fundamental Self. We take this world as reality which is *māyā*, and blindly suffer our worldly joys and sorrows. The dream-analogy is extensively employed in Vedānta literature to make the concepts of *līlā* and *māyā* intelligible to us. The only major difference between Vedānta and our present philosophy lies in the approach, for, as we noted at the outset, we postulate this cosmic spirit and do not speak of proving it as true. But Vedānta believes that its assertions are true by virtue of the direct verification of them in the extraordinary experiences of the Vedic sages.

We believe, however, that if we are satisfied with our theory, because of its simplicity and adequacy in systematizing our experience, and because of its appeal to our individual bent of mind, our next step should be to see if we can really rise to the state of the cosmic spirit and realize what the theory maintains. This will at least strengthen our own faith in the theory even though it may not produce that kind of intellectual conviction which universal acceptance of a statement does in science and commonsense. But that is not expected in metaphysics where, because it is a matter of vision and attitudes, we can have alternative metaphysics. The criteria of simplicity and adequacy are not very objective ; what may be a gratuitous assumption for one thinker may be a necessary truth for another. A large margin for subjective preferences has to be admitted in our view of metaphysics, and this is in keeping with our metaphysical theory according to which our thoughts and attitudes are but various adopted modes of the cosmic spirit that loves variety.

Vedānta as a Scientific Metaphysics

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Science is said to imply a metaphysics. We must, however, determine the nature of this implication before working out it's content that is to say, we must make sure how far and in what manner science serves as a basis of our researches into the ultimate reality before we start them. Science does not imply a metaphysical principle in a strictly logical sense in which the premises of a deductive syllogism imply their conclusion. The conclusion follows from their premises so that it cannot be false if the latter are true, whereas a metaphysical principle like substance or causality does not follow in this manner from science, which employs these principles in its organization of experience. Science may be true without these principles being so. What science proves is that the phenomena it has studied so far could be organized if certain metaphysical principles were granted in these cases and that they are quite compatible with the possibility, these principles being operative only in the restricted field of study and for the time being and not elsewhere and for all times. These principles are not scientific in the sense that they are not derived from experience, for the obvious reason that experience cannot tell us anything of necessary and universal validity, such as all events are caused. In other words, science presupposes these principles, which are not its findings; and what one can conclude from the fruitful employment of these by science is that they are methodological tools or operational concepts rather than logically necessary and categorical truths. Science at most informs us that some events are causal and it is quite possible and consistent with this information that other events not studied by science are acausal, that is, casual.

Scientists, while 'sciencing', think as if these principles are universally valid in the world to make science possible. And so far as science may be truly held to be the model of our cognitive enterprise, these principles may also be treated as indispensable conditions of our knowledge. Though, they are neither known self-evidentially or demonstratively like geometrical axioms or theorems, nor can they be derived from experience, yet as beliefs which must be entertained in order to make any sense of the world of sensible phenomena they have to be given some place in our knowledge and not waived aside as mere opinions or subjective preferences. Some regard these as self-evidential truths, some as mental determinations having no objective validity, while some others, following Kant, treat them as mental forms having an objective necessity about them derived from their being indispensable conditions of our knowledge. We reject the first of these views as superstitious and the last on the ground that the possibility of knowledge in every sphere of the sensible phenomena is not proved. As to the second view that the principles are a matter of mental habit (or even linguistics or speech forms as some hold), and anthropological fact having no metaphysical status, we have to ask how these habits (or forms) are related to the sensible facts organized under them and why they apply to the latter. Though there is no transcendental necessity of the kind a Kantian would have us to see through a transcendental reflection to be there behind the principles, yet some sort of necessity, that is, objectivity and universality, must be granted to them to distinguish them from our fancies and myths. The straightforward solution would be to regard them as methodological schemes or models, of which it is meaningless to ask whether they are true or false or whether they exist or not; and since they are framed to serve as scaffoldings for the data which are synthesized under them the question why they apply to the data does not arise. In other words they are postulates and we should speak of causality or substance not as we do of chairs or tables or of an empirical law such as 'copper is a good conductor'. The latter *are* there whereas the former are *as if* they are there. Strictly speaking even chairs and tables are constructs, the data which suggest them are sense-experiences. Reification occurs in their case and it is but a very short step from data to them and they are validated so frequently that they appear as 'verifacts' or physical objects. However, there is a difference between an empirical *concept*, as that of a chair or a table, and a categorical one, as that of causality or substance. Now the latter is like a model and even though it is found adequate it cannot be said to be true. It remains a tool or a convenient myth. If it is very convenient to imagine a gas as made up of small rigid balls in order to understand its behaviour, as the variations of its pressure with volume and temperature, it does not mean that these rigid balls actually exist in the gas.[1] The model is not a postulate of an existent and, so, not a directly verifiable thing like a planet or a *bacillus*.

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[1] Of course whether the molecules are models or inferred entities is still a controversial subject, but that there are pure models, e.g. lines of force in electricity or waves in wave-mechanics, is admitted.

Causality as a necessary connection between the cause and the effect and substance as a permanent self-identical substratum of a thing are models constructed on the analogy of certain self-evidential characters of our self-consciousness where indeed we find causal efficiency and substantiality. We will and do and we continue to be the same persons in spite of our continual change. Now causality and substance, as principles of synthesis of outer experience are models framed on the analogy of causality and substance as they are actually given in our inner experience; as such they are neither true nor false in the ordinary sense, so that so far as they are derived from science they are not metaphysical principles which must be either true or false, but only models, more or less adequate mental schemes, to bring the sensible phenomena into order. As such they are not descriptive but prescriptive or suggestive having no existential claim. They are nevertheless not mere fictions, for though they are not replicas of any reality, they are analogous to some and they help picturing what is going on in the world. Of course, a particular manner of picturing the inner mechanism of the world may change with our mental development and research when new analogies may replace old ones; but so far as a particular picture is employed by a large community of thinkers in their understanding of the world, which cannot be viewed as a mere complex of sense-data in a phenomenalistic manner, this picture or model has a reality, of some sort. It is not as real as chairs and tables but not as unreal as our passing fancies and such myths as mermaids and satyrs.

Some people think that science may be given a purely phenomenalistic interpretation, so that everything there might be expressed in terms of actual and possible sense-data and no such principle as substance and causality, nor any mechanical models, like micro-physical particles or ether waves need be employed. Thus substance is for them a permanent possibility of sensations and causality is but regular succession of these, and we might treat the mechanical models as auxiliary devices or mere vehicles for equations describing certain relations of sense-data. Now this positivistic programme has been possible in some sections of scientific research with respect to mechanical models but not with respect to the psychological ones. Science cannot conceive how there may co-exist sensible qualities without *something* having them and how they may succeed one another without *something* remaining permanent and self-identical all along. Again, if we restrict ourselves to a language of sense-data we have to describe an unobserved cause of an observed effect as possible sense-data, that is, as what might have been observed if some one were to observe them under suitable conditions. But then we have to show how a possibility can account for an actuality. Moreover, to say that a chair is a collection of sense-data is not an adequate account of the chair, for what sense-data out of an infinitude of them that one might find about oneself constitute a chair cannot be exhaustively enumerated without the antecedent conception of the chair; and what collects or holds together these data has to be clarified. The category of substance cannot be dispensed with in giving an account of the chair or any physical object. With regard to causality the phenomenalistic rendering of it as succession according to some rule does not appear adequate, for in order to predict future events from the present ones, science has to believe, as a rational policy, in some sort of necessity in the succession on the basis of some laws.

Science certainly does not logically imply substance and causality, which are not scientific principles; but it is plain enough that it does believe in them. This broad metaphysical attitude is also seen from its general aim and method. Science believes in an outer world as an object for its study and causal efficiency. It wants to know and use the world which must be, therefore, something having various attributes which change as their conditions are altered. To know these conditions of change and to produce them to have desired changes in nature is the aim of science. Reliable understanding of nature such as science seeks implies causal sequences in her; and our use of scientific knowledge to harness nature to our service implies the belief in the necessary connection of our implements with natural objects. Thus though science cannot demonstrate substance and causality, yet it can hardly outgrow its faith in them.

Here then is a situation that calls for philosophical reflection which will bring out and develop the implications of science to the full. What do the metaphysical beliefs of science signify? To express this significance is to lay down the outline of a metaphysics of science.

Some mistaken ways of going over from science to metaphysics

Before we proceed to draw the outline of the metaphysical background of science, we must clear the way by pointing out some of the mistakes that a philosopher of science commits in this rather slippery task. Some have straightway derived materialism from science because of the fact that science takes for granted the sense-experience and their mechanical interconnections. But this is over-simplification of the issue. For science also has to admit the mind of the scientist that relates facts with facts, invents hypotheses, and seeks to understand or make sense of the given sense-experiences. Moreover, in biology and psychology certain categories such as of self-regulation, reproduction, memory, anticipation, organization, etc. have to be introduced which are not mechanistic and cannot be interpreted on a materialistic basis. The behaviouristic psychology, which wants to do away with everything denied to observation, has proved unworkable and absurd in the face of facts of introspection; the physico-chemical method in biology fares no better. So science is not materialistic.

It cannot be shown to be idealistic either in the easy manner in which many people seek to do it. Some, following James Jeans and Arthur Eddington, argue that science has done away with matter which has been reduced to electricity or energy-waves. But a clear thinker will ask how this can be. If materiality or solidity be no reality but an appearance conjured up by electricity or energy-waves, what is the relation between the two? How can any appearance appear at all ? And, then, how can science deny without self-contradiction the appearances or sensible qualities which form its data and which it relates and orders? Hence science cannot disprove matter.

Some say that the ultimate stuff of the world is thought or mind-stuff because science speaks in terms of mathematical formulas which are no things but thoughts. This too is false formalism, for the mathematical forms are correlates of some concrete contents or sensible variables which they subsume and not self-sufficient realities. The law implies an intelligent mind, the law-maker, but it implies also a material field of its application. So that a monistic idealism cannot be derived in this manner from science which appears to be dualistic.

Some idealistic philosophers of science derive an idealism from science by taking recourse to a causal theory of knowledge. An object is said to produce a sensation in the mind which, therefore, cannot speak of an extra-mental object but only of its ideas. This is an age-old fallacy, for the arguer assumes the external objects as the cause of the ideas. If, now, he denies the object and, so, the cause of the idea in his mind, he will be a phenomenalist. For he cannot possibly speak of the ideas as caused by his own mind as the subjective idealist does; this is absurd, inasmuch as his mind does not control the ideas which, moreover, have close agreement and correlation with other ideas in other minds. The hypothesis of a God causing them in this manner will be too farfetched for him who does not entertain matter being the cause. Now if he is a phenomenalist believing in the self-sufficiency of ideas, philosophically it is not an impossible position but scientifically it is inadmissible. For, as we have shown, science requires a belief in substance behind the sensible appearances. And then to regard the ideas as independent of any mind is to treat them as substantial or material, only now we have to admit that matter can be both created and destroyed in order to explain change in the sensible appearances. So a phenomenalistic inerpretation also will not really suit science which ordinarily believes in the external world of objects or in physical reality. Science also believes in the mind, both individual and universal. The former because it cannot overlook the part played by the individual scientists in scientific research and, particularly, in the inventive part of it where experiments, hypotheses and mathematical formulas have to be devised. The latter because it cannot forget the implications of the interpersonal communication in scientific enterprise and of the universality of the laws of nature.

Some new results of science have sometimes been used by some scientists to throw light on our metaphysical notions. But generally speaking, no result of science can alter any of our basic conceptions of the world. For science, as a method of enquiry, has to accept the latter and, then, no scientific result can have universal validity, the world of science being an open, and not a closed, system. Thus the principle of uncertainty in new quantum physics has been employed by some to discredit the causal principle. But this is a vain attempt in so far as the uncertainty principle applies only in the case of micro-physical entities and when applied in the case of macro-bodies, the principle will yield certainties in place of probabilities. Besides, science, both in its ordinary and experimental methods, including that which led to the discovery of the uncertainty principle, uses the principle of causality, and the limits of certainty with regard to a micro-body have been laid down with absolute precision; so that even if we admit this uncertainty as objective or in nature and not subjective or in us, we have to see how it cannot allow us to infer from it a universal loose-jointedness. Again to imagine, as many have done, that this principle ensures us our free will is to misconceive the whole situation. For, that our will is free is to be known either intuitively or inferentially from our feeling of freedom and of such moral sentiments as self-reproach and self-approbation. The reign of law in nature cannot lead us to imagine ourselves as determined, for we are not parts of nature, rather we are persons who know nature and its laws and act upon it. To argue that our acts have motives and these must have some further causes and, so, everything is predetermined, is again to think of ourselves after the pattern of a mechanical system. The mechanical analogy should not be used, for the mind is not a machine and, then, psychology so far has not found any indication of a mental determinism in the strict sense. We have certain laws of behaviour but we can at any time transcend them; and to have them is quite compatible with and, in fact, necessary for, our freedom, by which we do not mean absolute haphazardness or caprice, but intelligent behaviour. By freedom we mean self-determinism.

The principle of Relativity has been harnessed by some philosophers of science to undermine our faith in objectivity and universality of empirical facts. But this too is a wrong move. For what Relativity has shown is the relativity of the *measurements* with respect to reference-frames and not to our *minds*, and it seeks and finds objective laws of nature just as classical physics did. How can a physical theory speak of subjectivity of laws without self-contradiction? Then, how could Einstein speak of relativity of lengths and intervals of time in certain circumstances, viz. when the bodies concerned are at great distances and moving with enormous velocities, if he denied absolute lengths and times altogether? He had to accept the latter in the case of measurements undertaken in the immediate neighbourhood of the observer. Otherwise he would have got stuck in absolute scepticism. The theory of Relativity gives us knowledge of nature and, so, objective laws operating in nature. Though it shows that measurements made in deferent systems moving with different velocities with respect to one another, are different, it gives us the laws by means of which one can tell from measurements made in one system those to be found in another. So that intersubjective communication, which is the condition of any knowledge, is fulfilled by this theory. The transformation equations, the law of equivalence, the cosmological constant and cosmical time, which are some of the main features of the theory of Relativity, speak for the basic absolutism or objectivity admitted by any scientific theory. So the Relativity theory cannot serve the cause of idealism in the way it has generally been made to do.

Certain other results of science are used for philosophical reconstruction. For instance, from the second law of thermodynamics, viz. that the available heat energy in a system decreases, some conclude that the universe is heading towards a cold death, that is, a state of affairs where heat will be equally distributed all over the universe—the temperature becoming very low everywhere—and where there will be no exchange of heat anywhere. But this cosmological speculation is very risky, for the second law of thermodynamics is based on observations in the systems available in our world, while the universe at large is an open system and so is science in general. Again, the speculations about the expanding universe are weakly founded for similar reasons. The red-shift found in the spectral lines got on the analysis of the light from distant nebulae indicates that the latter are receding from our world at a tremendous speed, so that the universe may be expanding and all its matter was collected at a place some two thousand million years ago. But any such theory supposes the physical law of red-shift, viz. the Doppler Effect that connects the recession of a source of light with its increase in wave-length (i.e. change towards red), to hold equally throughout the whole space and time where it is applied. Actually the law is found to hold under certain limited conditions and one cannot say what new conditions occur when light is coming from distant nebulae for millions of years, so that such cosmological conjectures on the basis of some results of science are more exciting than enlightening. In any case they should not be made the starting point of far-reaching speculations such as the periodical birth and death of the world. No scientific law, so far discovered, can have a universal application, that is, validity over all space and time, and, therefore, philosophical significance in a strict sense. Observation and experiment carried on in a small part of the universe during a short stretch of time cannot yield us anything to warrant any universal judgment regarding the origin and nature of the universe, much less any proof of some metaphysical theory, either of an idealistic or materialistic type. Science in its results is thus philosophically neutral. But science in its methodological suppositions, however, as already pointed out, suggests a dualistic metaphysics.

The way from science to metaphysics

The right way to move towards a metaphysical view of things from science is thus, not to start from any of its results, nor to regard the presuppositions of its aim and method as necessary implications or conclusions. In a word, science, both in its results and method, has no metaphysical implications, which people generally believe it to have. No such metaphysics can be really derived from science as some have done with great popularity. Such metaphysical speculations arising out of science may have some place in philosophy of science because of their connection with science and their popular appeal to the imagination and sentiment of the people who do not very much bother about the logical rigour of the speculations. Thus the works of James Jeans and Arthur Eddington have received much praise from various sections of their readers though they have been pungently criticized by more careful thinkers like L. Susan Stebbing and C.E.M. Joad.[2]

The way we think one might philosophize on science is through a critical reflection on the method of science. Thus, when one reflects on the situation discussed above, namely, that there is neither a direct intuition nor demonstration of substance and causality being there in nature and yet they cannot be dispensed with in scientific thinking, one comes to view these categories as originally given in self-consciousness but projected on nature which is understood through them. Substance and causality are in nature more or less as beauty is there. From a purely scientific or positivistic point of view it is *as if* they are in nature, for they are not as evident as chairs and tables, but are somehow presupposed by science which, as we have seen, cannot adopt a phenomenalistic outlook. A philosophical reflection on this situation would reveal that the categorical aspects of nature, the pervasive principles of unification of sense-data, are *in us*, as Kant first pointed out, and they are read into nature. The other main categories, besides substance and causality, are space, time, quantity, quality and reciprocity. These are the chief forms of our knowledge of the world which is known as out there (and not imaginary) so far as it is intelligible to us through them. These are the principles of objectivity as well, for the phenomena that fall into these grooves are distinguished from our subjective and free world of imagination. Besides these general forms of unification of sense-data and objective knowledge regarding them (apart from our beliefs regarding our dreams and delusions) we have specific rules of co-existence and succession, which we arrive at through experience employing the general rules of causality and reciprocity which are within us and which are presupposed by any such inductive search after the specific rules of dispositions of the sensible data. These rules are the specific determinants of objectivity. Anything not causally related to other things is regarded as false— a fire that does not heat is rejected as an illusion. The world is a system of objects interrelated by causal laws which science seeks to discover.

Now the question that naturally arises here is one of the relation of the self-consciousness, that is awareness of the categorical forms of knowledge being within it, to the sense-data and the specific laws that appear to be out there. Why should the mind's law apply to the extra-mental data which conform to them or why should the mind be able to anticipate certain broad features of nature? The answer seems to be this, that the two are not really alien. The same mind that has the categorical forms in it and projects them upon nature also projects the latter and its specific laws. Why then is this apparent otherness of nature and specific laws, which are sought after by the mind? The answer is, this is how the mind can regard the world as real and, so, enjoy it as an experience, just as it enjoys the dream-world which also it projects and alienates for the purpose of enjoyment, though on a lower level. Knowledge thus comes to be recognition or receiving what is one's own. Unless we think of it in this manner it remains a puzzle, for otherwise how can the mind know what is foreign to it or receive what is not its own remains unexplained. Knowledge, then, is like knowing what is projected by the mind, which sportively forgets that it is projected and thus enjoys the objects as given. Reflective analysis or self-probing reveals the secret operation of the mind in knowledge; and as this analysis proceeds, the different stages of this projective and self-forgetting activity are laid bare. At first the basic categories that appear to be out there in nature are found to be in the mind. Such an analysis with its results was first given by Kant. That the sense-data and their specific laws ordinarily revealed by the senses and our inductive enquiry are also the work of the same mind is at first conjectured from the fact of the application of the categories to nature. The analogy of our dreams and delusions also helps this conjecture.

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[2] Stebbing's: *Philosophy and the Physicists*, and Joad's: *Philosophical aspects of Modern Science.*

Then comes the testimony of the mystics, particularly those of the Upaniṣads, who regard the mind to be the origin of the world which is said to be an illusory creation or *māyā*. While one may not believe in such a transcendental solipsism until one has himself had an experience of the situation described, one cannot also deny the possibility of such an experience on any *a priori* ground. It would be dogmatic to do so and not in keeping with the spirit of science. Particularly so in modern times, when science is revealing the higher reaches of our personality through its researches in parapsychology. We cannot set arbitrary bounds to our knowledge and to the universe of intelligent discourse. To say with the positivist that we can know only the sensible characters is to raise a mandatory principle, viz. that we need not go beyond the little definite that the senses offer us, to the level of a metaphysical principle. It is, in other words, to confuse a methodological policy, which may serve science and work-a-day life well, with an epistemological law, and as a result, to buy clarity and precision at the cost of wisdom and comprehensiveness. It is to allow our biophysical nature to rule our intelligent one and, so, to decide our ultimate philosophy.

This is then our theory of knowledge, that it is but recognition of a content which belongs to mind that is creative and recognitive while ordinarily forgetful of this real nature of knowledge. Again, philosophy, in the sense of discipline for the mind to delve into itself and be self-aware, reveals to it the subjective origin of the world which therefore gradually ceases to be objective as one progresses in this discipline. Philosophy thus spoils the splendid dream by taking off the aspect of reality or givenness from the sensible world lent to it by the mind in its self-willed delusion and love of sport. It is as if the mind through its poetic activity conjures up a charming dream-world while philosophy, the proverbial enemy of poetry, exposes this dream and makes all charm fly at its cold analytical touch. In other words, a knowledge about our knowledge of the empirical world tends to expose the illusoriness of the latter knowledge, and, so, of the world. This awareness of the illusoriness of the world leads to the annihilation or sublation of it, as the realization of a delusion as such leads to its cancellation. But the same self that poetizes also philosophizes, and we are led to look upon this state of affairs as the self's alternate falling into a dream and coming back to its own— its rejoicings in this alternation between delusion and waking, creation and retraction, self-losing and self-finding. But the self that effects these transitions must be above both these states, one of actual self-possession, of which the self is conscious by virtue of its being aware of the possibility of self-alienation, over against which possibility it stands, and of this self-delusion from which it recovers itself. This higher self is the subject-object-less undifferentiated self or Pure Consciousness that adopts these alternate forms— self-consciousness, to which the world is an illusion and a mere possibility, and objecto-centric consciousness in which the self takes the world for reality.

Thus the epistemological presuppositions of the scientific outlook, when worked out, offer us an idealistic view of the world that science studies and a view of the self as pure transcendental consciousness. All this, however, does not conflict with science just as the dream-world does not conflict with the empirical reality. They belong to two different planes of reality, so that these presuppositions of science are not on the same plane as science or the physical world occupies, and, therefore, they are *transcendental*; and this form of idealism is called transcendental idealism. It is empirical realism, for the world is real from an empirical or relative (*vyavahārika*) standpoint but it is mental from a transcendental or ultimate (*pāramārthika*) point of view. The presuppositions are not obvious and they lie in the underground to be dug out by transcendental reflection. Kant was essentially right in holding that the categorical forms of knowledge are in us and that the world is phenomenal and not ultimately real. What he failed to prove is the necessity of these forms, that is, their being as objective as the sense-data they unify. This he could not do for he took the sense data to be really given from outside, the unknown and unknowable things-in-themselves. So when he spoke of the world as phenomenal he meant the world that is intelligible to us through the categories that are in us. Why the forms apply to the data could not be really answered by him, as his answer was circular. The forms apply because otherwise the world would be unintelligible. But why the world should be intelligible he did not answer; and so Hume, who challenged anybody to show why causality should be held as necessary, remains unanswered, though Kant thought he answered Hume. Thus the necessity of the categorical forms and, so, of the idealistic view of the world, to which the view that categories are in the mind, leads, is not a logical type. Nor is it of a psychological type, such as is presupposed in our faith in the uniformity of nature, learnt from experience, when, for example, we predict that there will be light if we strike a match. These metaphysical presuppositions are transcendental in the sense that they belong to transcendental, and not empirical, psychology. They are not on the surface but in the deep; and their existence and necessity can be revealed and appreciated only when one delves deep into one's self or goes beyond the obvious experiences to trace them to their ground or original home. Kant went very near this view of things which we find in Vedānta where it is told that the necessity behind all this creation, sense-qualities, and their laws, is that of sport. The self that is free creates a world and regulates it by laws and takes all this as real, for a sport cannot start unless there is variety of items and rules and unless these are taken seriously as given from outside. The rules as well as the so-called data or the items are thus necessary in a sense, yet not so in another. This view of the matter accords to some extent with that of the conventionalists in scientific methodology, such as, Poincare and Einstein, who believe that the laws of science, both general and specific, are mere conventions and may be changed at will. They are necessary so far as some rules are necessary for understanding phenomena or playing a game, but conventional so far as there may be alternative sets of them.

Thus a critical reflection on science leads to a view that, while accepting everything in science as proper in the plane where it works, shows the relative status of this plane with regard to a standard that is ultimately our self or consciousness. The subject that knows the empirical world is the empirical self while one that is aware of this knowledge as its own making and, so, as illusory, is the transcendental self. To the latter the world is there as a dream which, therefore, it can fashion as it pleases, just as we sometimes do in our dreams when we are conscious of it as such. We catch ourselves manipulating affairs in the dream. This transcendental self also knows the future and the past and other minds which are but its creations. This state of the self is God-like. *Īśvara* is said to be the wielder of *māyā*, *Māyādhīśa*. The self that attains this state is free from the bondage of the world though it is in the world, which still appears to it to be there though like a dream when the world is known as such. This state of the self is called in Vedānta *jīvanmukti* or salvation in the living condition. But this state will naturally lead to one in which the world is sublated, even as the recognition of a dream as such leads to its cancellation. This state is called *videhamukti*, salvation after bodily death, for in this state the body cannot exist. We have a foretaste of this state in our dreamless sleep when we have no world standing over against us. But as in the dreamless sleep, so in the *videhamukti*, there is the self standing over against the possibility of the world to appear. The world is cancelled but not its possibility or its absence. Thus the self is still a subject against a dark background of an object which is not any definite thing but an indefinite object in general or objectivity in a symbolic form. But beyond or above this subject-object bifurcated self and forming its ground is the undiffentiated self or Pure Consciousness which in itself, being aware of the duality to which it willingly descends, is neither a subject nor an object. This is Brahman, the one without a second, which in itself never really becomes the world of change and multiplicity but only adopts these forms which are in it *as it were* in the manner in which we adopt various forms in our dream and fancies. Thus Brahman as pure Spirit is ever the same and all its descent into the plurality of names and forms (*nāma-rūpa*) are but like the self-conscious imaginative activity of a poet who never really loses himself in his work, which is deliberate. Thus Brahman is the foundational self, the most self-aware which knows all the lower states and their objective counter-parts as its self-adopted modes.

The task of the philosopher is to lead the enquiring mind to this state of perfect self-awareness which is implicit in us and which, indeed, is the real enquirer of the origin and status of everything that appears to be there. Since the Absolute is really in us It cannot accept anything else than Itself as given but must question it. Everything appears to It as contingent which has to be traced back to some self-subsistent Being, which must be Itself, for It cannot question Itself. Thus a philosophical enquiry has for its real enquirer the highest Self which starts with a question regarding the origin and status of ordinary knowledge, that science and commonsense gather, and ends with the realization that all that appear to be not this Self are but Its adopted states and their objective correlates, 'fallings and vanishings' of Brahman. The philosopher asks the overwhelming question—'how comes this world of sense-experience and coherent laws' which does not occur to the scientist who takes the world as given and only seeks to know the details of its content. The philosopher, therefore, is awakened dimly from the state of sleep and self-delusion or the Brahman in him is preparing to come to its own. This home-coming will be in the form of its tracing everything to It, that is, in showing everything as self-evidently involved in It. Philosophy, thus, is a process of self-recovery and not a speculative theory or telling of stories. This is natural, for that which enquires after the ultimate reality cannot really have an answer if this reality lies outside it. It must identify this reality with the mind that enquires and reality must be shown to be manifest in our actual experience. This was realized by almost all great thinkers and mystics including Plato, Aristotle, the scholastics and Hegel. The Vedic seers said, 'That thou art' and believed that philosophy is that knowledge which reveals reality to us and, therefore, our highest self to us. As such philosophy is not like natural science that offers us informations about, and a handle to, nature. It is a spiritual science that transforms our being. It makes us aware of the free and immortal Self in us, the Brahman that we are, of which God is but a form or mode of appearance. 'To know Brahman is to become Brahman' says the Upaniṣad. This is because Brahman is but perfect self-awareness and ultimate being that we really have in us as our ground and, so, to know or realize this is to assume our original and authentic state, withdrawing from the playfully adopted modes or mock-beings. To know Brahman is to know our essential being (our *sat*, our *svarūpa*) and this is also to realize the essential joy of our being (ānanda).

Conclusion: Certain misconceptions regarding science

A critical reflection on science, thus, may lead us to a certain view of our knowledge and of Self and God. It is impossible to develop in full the philosophy we have sketched above, and many loose-ends and gaps, obvious to anybody who looks into it, are left therein. It has been our purpose here to indicate how a metaphysics might be constructed on the basis of science. The general nature of this metaphysics is spiritualistic, such as is found in the Vedāntic tradition. Such a metaphysical construction, when fully carried out, will have a value in our age of science when the great prestige of science will add importance to this metaphysics, which will, therefore, appear more worthy of our attention and application than one arising out of our reflection on moral or religious intuitions. The latter have now less credit with the people at large than science. Of course the results of science are justly held as more or less tentative and of a narrow field of applicability and, so, as not a fit base for philosophy. But the method of science, because of the vast amount of information it has helped us to gather and of the technology to master, commands great respect and confidence from us. Therefore a metaphysical search, such as we have undertaken here, starting from a reflection on the method of science or of empirical knowledge and tracing the beliefs that are involved in this method back to their origin, the pure awareness and the ground of all experience, is a fruitful undertaking on the part of a modern thinker. And what is interesting and hopeful in this task is that the conclusions to which it leads us do not conflict with but support those arrived at through reflecting upon our moral and religious experiences. That is to say, they reinforce, and not interfere with, the traditional ethical idealism and theism.

And here we have to point out some of the misconceptions regarding science and its underlying philosophy. It is true that the religio-ethical outlook that science generates in the first instance is rather positivistic, where it is hard to find God or conscience in the idealistic sense. There is instead an awe for, and a stoical resignation to, law and order; and no hope in personal freedom and immortality and in the future of the world. So there is a general pessimism that lack of faith in God, the beneficent overseeing Lord of the universe, naturally engenders. And as for morality, science no doubt fosters the virtues such as respect for facts, love of rational order and clarity, freedom of expression, collective enterprise, co-operative understanding, and equality of opportunities. Yet science does not bother over the spiritual basis of our morals which, for it, are neither universal and categorical laws of our being nor indicative of our higher and immortal Self. Thus science, as it has actually influenced our outlook so far, has not been as salutary as our traditional religions and ethics have been. So the sages of our time, as of old, are uneasy with it though some magnify its faults unnecessarily. But science need not generate a positivistic religion and ethics which are its first fruits plucked a bit too early. That is to say, science breeds a rather narrow naturalistic outlook when it is taken raw. What is needed is a reflective analysis of the scientific method, that is, of empiricism, and this would show us a way to God, personal freedom and immortality, the future good of the world, and the immortality and spiritual origin of the moral law. The categories of our natural knowledge are shown to be in the transcendental Self by critical reflection on this knowledge; so are the laws of morality shown by the same reflection on our moral feelings and behaviour. And as the reflective activity in the first case exposes the part played by our self in the appearance of the world which then ceases to be a given object, it effects a similar disinterestedness with regard to the human world of profit and loss, success and failure; and everything appears to be a sport or a play-acting where duty becomes a free act of love, a thing or enjoyment of beauty. The moral laws appear as self-instituted rules of a joyous game. Thus they will appear as conventions, but in a way different from that of the naturalist who takes them as man-made conventions or contracts or even superstitions. They are objective and necessary so far as they apply to all, being instituted by the universal Self or God who resides in every mind and manifests Himself through our disinterested acts of goodness as He does through our love of truth and beauty, that is, our search for reality and our appreciation of things for their own sake. But these laws of morality are conventional in the sense that they are after all rules of a game and there might be other rules in another game and all this play (*līlā*) itself, is a mock-play, an imaginary affair. Thus a reflection upon our mental behaviour will take one beyond the superficial view of it fostered by a positivistic outlook, yet it will not make one a dogmatic and joyless moralist but will really conduct him to a position where he will have perfect freedom and peace.

Now the reflective activity, which is philosophizing in the real sense, is natural to us who must enquire into the ultimate basis of everything that appears, because that basis is our real Self. Then things that appear as given and self-subsistent in our naive attitude shed off their self-contained look and seem to be somehow related to us, borrowing their appearance of self-existence from ours who want our counterparts to play with. Philosophical reflection is a sign of our waking from the dream of life in this world and this reflection may start from anything which it judges with the criterion of self-subsistence and finds it falling short of this reality. The criterion is derived from self's own nature and all else is rejected as shadow of reality and declared 'not this', *neṭi*. So the truth may be reached from any point in the world grounded on it, as all roads lead to Rome. The world that covers Brahman, having been issued from It, also points to Brahman, its source and ground, to the enquirer, who being himself essentially this Brahman is not content with the appearance of truth, and sooner or later asks the all-important question of the origin and ground of the world. This ground itself is assumed to be self-subsistent, and since the only thing that cannot be questioned but must be accepted as ultimate is pure consciousness, this ground is Pure Consciousness.

To conclude, then, science has metaphysical implications but they have to be brought out through reflection upon its method and not speculating upon its results. They, when thus recovered, will be found to be not much different from the tenets of the perennial philosophy and not less salutary for the individual and society. In fact, they help our self-knowledge which is the ultimate good behind all other proximate ones. These implications, however, are not the direct logical consequences, nor psychological influences, of science, which are rather positivistic and metaphysically neutral. They are the far-reaching presuppositions or ultimate results, to be drawn out, through a kind of transcendental reflection; and their necessity or objectivity is not as obvious as that of the logical or even psychological ones of the ordinary type. Logical necessity flows from our definitions, whether explicit or implicit; and psychological necessity from our ordinary common human nature studied by empirical science. The necessity pertaining to the deep-seated presuppositions of science, which we have brought out here and which form a metaphysics, is of a peculiar type. It is the necessity of the free cosmic mind in its creative activity so that every individual mind that reflects on any obvious experience finds the latter to involve and to be grounded in, more basic experiences, which become clearer as the reflection proceeds further. The necessity of these various stages of experience with its subjective and objective poles, appears in the form of these stages being *recognized* to be there, discovered and not invented. It is therefore the same kind of necessity as we grant to the perceptual objects which also appear to be out there *as unknown* before and after they are actually perceived. This is the original and ultimate nature of necessity of perceptual objects, chairs and tables. The practical test of necessity and objectivity is social agreement or public assent; but that this is not ultimate is seen from the fact that the opinions of persons and persons themselves, to count for anything, have to be first accepted as objectively there. Of course, the practical test of necessity or truth of our metaphysical derivations of science is also public assent; but before one assents or dissents to any of them, one has to undergo the necessary discipline and see for oneself whether the experiences follow one another in the manner described here. One should not refuse to reflect like the critics of Galileo who refused to peep into his telescope. Such dogmatic critics of our metaphysics of science will not be wanting but they should remember that this is against the spirit of science, which is bold and experimental.

Vedānta as a Scientific Philosophy 15

Introduction

Objectives and Preliminary Definitions

There is one kind of scientific philosophy that enquires into the philosophical presuppositions of science, and so it identifies itself with the system of ideas embedded in the methods and results of science. There is another kind of scientific philosophy that arises out of critical and constructive reflection, in the spirit of science, upon the first kind of scientific philosophy which may be equated with the philosophical creed of science. The object of this essay is to present a scientific philosophy of the second kind. This has three stages, corresponding to the three stages of reflection carried on in the philosophical creed of science. We have, first, to draw out of the present-day scientific practice and achievement of science the outline of the philosophical creed that science implies and, secondly, to explicate the scientific spirit or attitude which it expresses and which works upon its tacit philosophical creed to lead up to the various grades of scientific philosophy. We shall also see how far the final stage of scientific philosophy is essentially Vedānta philosophy.

Some Clarifications

(a) By 'scientific philosophy', one is led to think of a complete and incorrigible kind of philosophy, but we hasten to observe that our philosophy, as will be presented here, is far from this kind. We call it scientific, for it raises itself upon the methodological presuppositions and general spirit of modern science as well as on its results so far as the latter reacts on the former; and since all these factors change with time—science being an open system with no claim to absolute objectivity and finality—our scientific philosophy is offered as a possible outlook for the consideration of our readers.

(b) By 'science' and 'scientific practice', we mean the essential aspects of the various processes and products designated by these expressions. We are concerned chiefly with the basic ideas such as are related to the theory of knowledge and cosmology, and these are mostly found in physics. For the methodology of science, too, we enquire into physics, which is the most advanced branch of science and the ideal of all other sciences.

Possibility of a Scientific Philosophy

A scientist is primarily concerned with such concepts as are directly instrumental in his task of correlating experience. Yet, he cannot rest content with these scientific concepts, and must sooner or later ask questions regarding the basic tenets of his conceptual system or the world-picture. His scientific enterprise teaches him to enquire into the basis of every idea and to develop a new vocabulary and logical grammar to make room for new ideas which bear only a very distant analogy with our ordinary ones. Einstein's criticism of simultaneity of spatially separated events and Heisenberg's denial of simultaneous occupation of a precise position and a velocity by an electron are cases to cite in favour of this statement. The Relativity and Quantum theories have given a number of very abstract concepts which represent no ordinarily perceptible objects, but only very partial analogues of familiar experience. They are indirectly, conditionally and partially verifiable, their consequences, under certain empirical hypotheses and test-conditions, being verifiable by observation. So that a scientist cannot fight shy of examining the basic ideas of science and of reconstructing them in order to effect a better comprehension of his experience. His philosophical enterprise, in this manner, is an extension of, and not a break with, his scientific work. This work today is not just observation and generalization, as it was at the infancy of science, when it was but natural history, but it is one involving very bold and abstract theorizing, requiring much imagination and openness of the mind. The modern physicist is acquainted with a metaphorical mode of understanding; his wave-function, four-dimensional continuum and curved space are concepts which could not be arrived at, and cannot be intelligently applied in scientific practice, without a critical reflection on the basic ideas of space, time, causality, and the rest. So that a conscientious scientist must naturally proceed to a logical analysis of his subject to find out its tacit presuppositions or creed and take systematic thought on the latter. This will lead him to the elements of a scientific philosophy. Modern science tends to burst its own confines and close up with scientific philosophy.

Scientific Philosophy and Vedānta

The conclusions of our scientific philosophy will be found to be not essentially different from those of Vedānta. So that our present construction of scientific philosophy will indirectly be a vindication of the Vedānta philosophy on the basis of modern science. And so far as the Vedānta philosophy is regarded as a rational rendering of the teachings of the Upaniṣads, our present efforts may be described as a scientific rationalization of these teachings. This general agreement between our scientific philosophy and Vedānta, by virtue of the fact that we find the model of a cosmic mind working from behind our individual minds, which are its dream-modes, so to say, is most simple and adequate to explain the pervasive features of our experience. The urge for such a theoretic explanation of our total experience is provided by the prevailing spirit of science that, as we shall see in the sequel, seeks after comprehension of the widest possible field of experience by means of abstract constructs which represent some objective entities bearing but faint analogy with our familiar experience. Of course, the Vedāntins treated the cosmic mind not merely as a suitable hypothesis, but believed it to be a fact capable of direct verification in some extraordinary kind of experience. And they stressed the necessity of such a verification, for a firm faith in the explanatory principle of the world of our ordinary experience will help us to achieve not only understanding, but also peace that surpasses understanding. They, therefore, held the testimony of the Vedic seers to be so very important for us; it is a kind of proof of the theory of the cosmic mind, which is thus not just a theory, but a reality for them, and which must at least be given some initial faith (*śraddhā*) when one hears of it from one's teacher. This hearing (*śravaṇa*) is followed by contemplation (*manana*), which makes it intelligible and plausible to one, and then by meditative search (*nididhyāsana*) that leads to a direct experiential verification of it. So there seems to be a difference in the attitude of the Vedāntin and that of a modern scientific philosopher with regard to epistemological status of the ultimate explanatory principle behind the world.

Now, we believe that the Vedāntin could not have laid much store only on the testimony of the Vedic seers and on their own personal experience, for these could not convince his opponents who would want more solid arguments in favour of the Vedānta theory. The Vedāntin had to be an intellectualist in his arguments with his opponent schools. So, he had to be a scientific philosopher in his aims and methods. The Vedānta that he offers in such circumstances must essentially be proposed as a most simple and comprehensive hypothesis and not either as a proved fact or a dogma. We are concerned here with this aspect of Vedānta, and we believe this to be the more important aspect from the philosophical point of view. The question of accepting and living by a particular philosophical theory is external to it, though it is a very important question in itself. It is more or less a psychological question involving taste, temperament, and cultural background, and, as Śaṅkara himself admits, not one of reason (*tarka*), but of actual experience of an extraordinary kind.

We may also note that only the *Brāhmaṇas*, who imbibed from childhood certain mental attitudes—particularly those of resignation towards the worldly life and a love of ideal peace and freedom to be had only when the soul is beyond the bondage of the flesh—were considered qualified for the study and practice of the Vedic teachings. Thus Vedānta, as well as the Vedic teachings that constitute its foundation, may be approached as a scientific philosophy proposing to us certain theoretical ideas for the comprehension of our experience and claiming for them not absolute truth or reality, but only provisional acceptability by virtue of their simplicity and adequacy. Unless we take Vedānta in this undogmatic and deontological manner, we cannot do justice to it as a philosophical system. We believe we have ample evidence in the history of Indian philosophy for our view that Vedānta was posed not solely as verified truth, but also as a very indirectly and partially confirmed abstract theory to be judged on the merit of its being so far the best possible theory.

If we do not treat it thus, then we cannot make sense of the chief Vedānta principle that the world is unreal. For how can we speak of the world as unreal, when it is the standard of reality? To say that what cannot be cancelled in experience is real and Brahman is not so cancelled, while the world is, in the experience of the Vedic seers, will not do. For, first, we have so far so very little authentic testimony of these seers that it cannot overweigh the testimony of the common people; and, secondly, what is actually once cancelled is only a contingent fact, and does not imply any logical necessity, and, so, may as well be reinstated, the appearance of necessity being only psychological. So that Vedānta cannot assert that the world is unreal, but can only propose that it may be imagined, after our dream-objects, to be but illusorily appearing, while some cosmic spirit be imagined, after our self that works our dreams from behind, to be the ground of these appearances and so real.

Thus Vedānta, in its scientific aspect, does not speak of ultimate being or reality of anything, for this is a matter of one's personal conviction, but only of what may be more fruitful or adequate as an explanatory theory. Since fruitfulness or adequacy is a matter of degree, the theoretical constructs of Vedānta cannot be asserted as ultimate beings. Something either exists or it does not; there is no question of degree there. Vedānta, conceived scientifically for philosophical purposes, cannot be ontological.

In saying this, we deny neither that the Vedic seers and Vedānta philosophers might well have meant it to be ontological stressing realization of the ultimate being more than a mere theoretic speculation over the highest explanatory principle of the world, nor the possibility of our having in future a common experience of the cosmic mind so far held as an abstract theory. But we propose that, so long as such a realization is not proving to be widely practicable, we may as well treat Vedānta as a scientific philosophy, emphasizing the aspect of it revealed in the arguments offered for it by the Vedānta philosophers in their discussions with their opponents. We maintain not that we should stop individual efforts at realization of the Vedānta theory, but rather this that such questions are more personal than intellectual and that, even if we have a direct verification of the theory by a wide circle of meditative persons, we cannot logically assert the existence of the entity represented by it. For the gulf between our experience and being or reality is in principle unbridgeable; the difference between the two is qualitative and not quantitative.

What is more interpersonally acceptable may be inferred to be more pervasive a feature of reality, and may for all practical purposes be treated as reality, but, strictly considered, such constructs are only more believed than others, their statements being more pinned down than others, and as such they are marked by degree and fluctuation, while being or reality must be free from these. Intellectual philosophy, thus, cannot achieve the objective of metaphysics, namely, a knowledge of ultimate reality; it can only find more and more adequate conceptual constructs to serve as our explanatory device, and can only hope that the most successful construct so far found may perchance represent the ultimate reality, if there be any. But it cannot be sure, for what is instrumental in the comprehension of the world of our experiences, and fulfils the conditions of simplicity and comprehensiveness, may not be what is really there, unless one arbitrarily defines reality in terms of success in theoretic comprehension.

The philosophical creed of science

Introductory

We shall now determine the creed of science by analysing the actual practice of the scientists, instead of looking for their expressed opinions, which widely differ amongst themselves. We should note in this connection that many things they hold to be obvious truths are but postulates. Goethe remarked : 'The greatest achievement would be to grasp that whatever we call "fact" is already "theory".'

Now, looking at a typical piece of scientific research, like the study of the reaction of water on sodium, we find that a scientist believes in certain substances like sodium and water, which possess uniformly, and are identified by, certain characters and dispositions. The former are patent, independent of one's perceiving them; the latter, too, are independent, but are latent capacities to be defined in terms of certain reactions that a substance produces on being treated with other substances. Thus the capacity of sodium to produce hydrogen, when placed in water, is a disposition of the substance, which is known by the sum total of its characters and dispositions. The scientist believes in the objective being and systematic relationships or regular co-existence and succession of sensible characters according to rules which he seeks to discover. On the uniformity of the behaviour of observable characters, then, rests the possibility of sciences.

Such rules of behaviour of observable characters defining substances and their dispositions were sought to be further explained in terms of certain hypothetical entities which bear some analogy with some observable objects and which are logically observable, that is, which could be observed had there not been any empirical law and technical difficulties standing in the way. Thus the theoretical constructs like molecules, atoms, electrons, and waves of classical physics proved extremely successful in explaining large areas of observational data. They may be said to be indirectly observed 'through causality', as one may be said to touch a table by a stick. In fact, such an indirect observation through an interpretation of a connected series of observations, such as of pointer-readings, photographs of condensation tracks, clicks in the electronic counter (as in the case of an electron), and through established hypotheses employed in the working of these instruments, is held to be more reliable than a direct observation, just as a verdict based on a thorough circumstantial evidence is treated as more dependable than a few eye-witness accounts.

Abstract Theories versus Formal Ones

Now, so far as classical physics is considered, and even what is known as classical Quantum theory, one could at least imagine the postulated entities after certain familiar objects and so consider the explanation in terms of these postulates to be causal or mechanical. But difficulties arose when, with the advent of what is known as new quantum mechanics or wave mechanics of Schrödinger, Heisenberg and Dirac, and of the General Theory of Relativity of Einstein, we could not thus imagine the postulated entities after any familiar thing. It is impossible to picture an electron that, according to one wave-mechanical interpretation of it, extends all over the universe and can be located at no particular position; and according to another, the probability of its being found reaches a maximum at one place and speedily decreases as we go further. Such an electron cannot be said to have a continuous path and to possess simultaneously both precise velocity and position. So that we cannot now speak of an electron as a possibly verifiable entity, as we did in the case of an electron of classical physics. Similarly, we cannot have any denotation or direct physical interpretation of such terms as Dirac's phase-waves or Schrödinger's wave-function or Einstein's gravitational potentials. These are only indirectly, partially and conditionally defined in terms of observable data.

Some people seem to be very much dissatisfied with this state of affairs in advanced physics, and believe that more sensible causal explanations must be sought to replace these very abstract ones that fail to serve as explanatory principles, as they cannot be thought to be existent behind the observable phenomena like the entities of classical physics. Others interpret these theoretical terms in new physics as bare symbols or uninterpreted inscriptions that are instrumental, like mathematical symbols, in correlating our experience, so that they do not serve to explain this experience. This formalistic interpretation of science reduces science to a descriptive and instrumental device, and so to a craft, while we still believe that it is and ought to be something more, offering us some explanatory knowledge of the observational data over and above a correlation of them.

We think that the working faith of the scientists or the creed that underlies their actual practice supports our view that science explains with theoretical constructs that represent some things, though the latter cannot be pictured and translated into ordinary observable terms. It is useless to complain that we cannot have more sensible constructs to explain the very rich and complex experiences dealt with by these more abstract constructs, and it seems too much to interpret these constructs as representing nothing, serving only as bare symbols. Most of modern methodologists, such as Carnap, Hempel and Braithwaite, consider them to be partially, indirectly and conditionally defined or interpreted constructs. As such, we think they must be regarded as standing for some objects and, so far as the former succeed as explanatory tools in wider areas of experience, the latter gain in empirical confirmation and in the possibility of existence. This existence, however, is not ontological or absolute, but only ordinary, like the existence of the intersubjective world, which means interpersonal acceptability as a more or less valid postulate.

Disappearance of Substance and Causality

Science, as it advances to meet the challenge of an evergrowing range of experience, has to abandon its earlier ideas of substance and causality. Substance, in the sense of some primary material stuff, cannot be retained, for we cannot explain how it is related to the secondary (or formed or structured) matter that we actually come across in experience. Plato's vague notion of participation of matter in forms or reflection in matter of forms cannot help. To think of a formless, dead or static world-stuff coming to life by the magic touch of structure and motion seems difficult. Modern science starts from the concrete objects, the physical things, treating them as complexes of observable characters and not as substances overlaid with the latter. The properties do not belong to some substratum, but are self-subsistent objects showing much uniformity in their co-existence and succession. In Relativity physics, we have now a unitary concept of space-time-matter or matter-motion and also the law of equivalence of matter and energy, by which we can quantitatively describe the transformation of matter into energy or motion and of the latter into the former. We have to abolish the idea of an indestructible substance. To retain substance in the form of some very elementary physical objects like atoms or electrons, or some continuous medium like ether, is also not very helpful, for, though they allow us to explain in their terms many of the observed characters or phenomena, they must be admitted to be but secondary matter; and then there is the question : Why must electron or ether with such and such characters defining it be ultimate? Why must we stop our enquiry at the bounds of an electron?

So we must now speak in science of constant co-existence and successions of sensible characters, instead of substances possessing certain fixed natures by virtue of which they own and display these characters. We must also speak of causality neither in the sense of efficient effectuation nor of necessary connection. Causality in the animistic sense of purposive productivity was eliminated by Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo, who built up a mechanical science in place of a teleological one; but they retained the idea of efficiency or activity as associated with causality. Newton introduced 'the mathematical way' in scientific research and eliminated this animistic notion of efficiency from causality, while Hume and Mill did away with the idea of necessary connection that seemed to define causality.

In recent physics, we are brought to admit that we can but speak of probabilities of observable events on the basis of our past observations. There is a limit to our precision about any report and to the degree of rational expectation of uniformity of the behaviour so far observed. For every process occurs under a set of conditions of which some only are specifically known to us, and we are not sure whether the others so far unknown are going to be obtained in future, so that we can never justly speak of a law in a categorical manner. In quantum physics, we have to speak in terms of probabilities or averages. We cannot speak of an electron to be found at a place, but only of a probability of its being so found. If the probability be very high, and still we do not find it on several occasions, there will be no falsification of the law concerned, for we may find it on later occasions. Some, for instance Einstein, resented this kind of science and the version of causality that it prescribes to us; but the majority of scientists and methodologists are reconciled to this circumstance, and they hope that commonsense and our ordinary language will gradually admit it, just as it has admitted the Copernican theory and other notions first declared to be absurd.

The notion that strict causality must be presupposed by science is unwarranted, for what science logically needs for its work to go on is that there be *some* regular features in the world, which may very well have many uncaused and irregular events and much loose-jointedness. The principle of causality need not be the ultimate major premise of all inductions, despite Mill who held it to be so. No metaphysical conclusion can be logically derived from science; only a few heuristic or methodological rules are so derived. One may *use* this latter rule analogically and universally to build up a metaphysical system and so to describe *all* events. But this metaphysical use of science must not be confused with the metaphysical implication of science and employed to exercise a logical check on science against its revision of the original working ideas.

Thus we see that modern science does not speak in terms of efficient and necessary causes, but in those of certain abstract constructs representing certain non-intuitable physical objects, which seem to be regularly and indirectly associated with the phenomena they help to comprehend. (This, of course, does not apply in the case of introspective psychology, where the mind actively and purposefully causes certain actions.)

Space, Time and Matter of New Science

Just as the ideas of substance and causality have undergone a sea change, so have those of space, time and matter. The classical concept of space, first formulated by Newton in terms of an infinite, homogeneous, continuous and intuitable public entity, is really a conceptual construct, by means of which science harmonizes the individual perceptual spaces which are finite, non-homogeneous and discontinuous. In fact, science takes this concept of space from commonsense, which, as well as science, is not aware of the element of construction or hypothesis involved in this matter.

Now, Newton's proofs for this absolute space do not hold water, and this is abandoned in new physics which offers a finite (or closed) and curved space welded with time and matter. This space-time-matter is surely very remote from any familiar object, and has to be admitted only because of its greater theoretical import or explanatory power. The ideas of time and matter are similarly drastically revised. This has certainly shocked our commonsense, but helped us to get over some of the perplexing questions regarding the relationship amongst space, time and matter and their infinity. The finite but boundless space may be imagined after its two-dimensional analogue, the surface of a sphere. Just as we cannot go out of the latter surface which bends inwards, so we cannot go beyond our spherical space which represents all matter and forces of the universe. The problem of the beginning and the end of time can be resolved by seeing that passage of time ceases to be meaningful when there is no change or succession of events; there cannot be any lapse of time before the beginning and after the end of the universe. The philosophical paradoxes of space and time are thus shown to be the result of our taking certain inadequate and partial constructs for independent realities. New science thus seeks to revise our older conceptual framework and language of science in the light of a vaster range and complexity of experience to be comprehended with greater simplicity and internal consistency. The new set of concepts are clearer and less riddled with puzzles than the older ones.

Concepts of Knowledge, Reality and Truth in Modern Science

We may as well note the revision of the concepts of knowledge, reality and truth in new science. Knowledge, in a certain sector of scientific enquiry, now means a correlation of the observable data in the sector in terms ultimately of some very indefinitely describable objects and proximately of other less indefinite ones, and some hypotheses by means of which we can connect the objects at the top with the observations at the bottom. In other words, we so define these top-level objects, like quanta, electrons, waves, etc., partially and conditionally, ultimately in terms of the observational data that they may be said to be explanatory of, and confirmed by, these data. What these objects themselves are is not known, though, as we noted before, they cannot be said to be non-existent for that reason, and the terms representing them, to be mere symbols without anything to symbolize.

Now these objects are very indefinite, empirically unverifiable—only their remote consequences being verifiable—and they cause the observable events neither in the sense of efficiency nor in that of necessary connection. So, then, knowledge means a tentative guess about a regular feature or structure of events in a field which may be associated with some one or more basic or primitive sorts of objects, like electrons or waves, which serve as explanatory principles. These objects are not causal agents, nor are they necessarily related to the events they correlate and explain, but are regular associates at the background of these events. Their association helps us to connect and explain certain otherwise loose events.

By 'reality', science means whatever is fruitful in systematizing and explaining, in the above sense, a certain section of our experience.

Since this fruitfulness or adequacy is a matter of degree, and the acceptance of any theoretical framework cannot logically prove the absolute existence of the corresponding objects of the theory, science has no ontological commitment. Thus atoms, electrons, and other entities of science are not real in any ontological sense. They are real in the sense that they are useful as devices in comprehending the data they are said to explain. In this sense, ether or phlogiston is unreal. The other kinds of entities used in science, such as the logical and the mathematical ones, are similarly real or unreal in so far as they are accepted and are useful tools in scientific enquiry and so parts of the scientific vocabulary. Again, as we noted before, and as Carnap has pointed out, the acceptance of a certain concept is a matter of choice and characterized by greater or less expediency; it does not imply any assertion, and is neither true nor false; so it cannot tell whether the entity accepted is real or not in the metaphysical sense.

'Truth' of a scientific theory does not mean any correspondence to some given state of affairs, though we do believe that there is something that the theory stands for. Truth means coherence with, first, the observable data which can be related with the theory through a chain of secondary theories and hypotheses, and second, with other theories in the field. The theory that gains in scope, theoretical import and empirical confirmation is considered to represent some more pervasive and basic entity than the obvious sensible data it comprehends under it. But such entities are not describable in ordinary language nor picturable in imagination. We do not know what exactly they are, though we are led to posit them as existing objects at the back of the observable data. We know that they are, and we can very indirectly and partially define them in observable terms, but we do not know what they are in themselves. We know them through their consequences, but not in themselves. But, as we have already maintained before, this partial and indirect description of them cannot be taken for their whole description. We have a notion of an indescribable yet existing staff, though we do not at the same time believe in a substance which is devoid of any character to be described. The entities signified by the abstract theoretical terms of science are not devoid of descriptive predicates, only we do not know the latter properly and those we seem to guess appear to be mutually conflicting. So they are an extraordinary sort of entities. We cannot consider them to be mythical, and the names for them bare inscriptions, for they have an elaborate, though partial, physical interpretation or observable consequences in conjunction with other hypotheses; and a mere myth or ghost cannot have all this.

The Spirit of Modern Science

Introductory

We have briefly described the philosophical creed of modern science underlying the scientific practice and marked by some self-conscious scientists and methodologists. We have also come across, in the course of this study, the prevailing scientific spirit. As we observed at the very outset, we shall reflect critically and constructively on the creed of science, following the scientific spirit, in order to develop a scientific philosophy. The spirit of science is characterized by (a) an urge for a wider or a more inclusive comprehension of the phenomena; (b) an active search for bold and abstract theories in place of older mechanical models and causal hypotheses; (c) its recasting of the natural language into an artificial or idealized one, more suited for scientific purposes; (d) an admission of an element of contingency or historicity in nature, of fallibility in scientific endeavour, and of incompleteness of the scientific world-view; (e) an effort to sublimate individual points of view or relativity into a universal outlook on nature; and (f) its deontological standpoint.

The First Three Features of the Scientific Spirit

The urge for greater comprehensiveness or scope of a theory is illustrated in physics by such theories as the kinetic theory of gases, electron theory of matter, relativity theory, wave theory, and the recent work on the unified field theory. The aim of science is to see if a theory devised to account for a certain range of data also applies to other ranges. This is known as the deployment or deductive fertility of a theory. As a theory gains in this quality, we can have a comprehension of a large area of observational field with greater logical simplicity or less number of gratuitous hypotheses. This urge for integration of wider areas of experience by fewer conceptual means led scientists in the past to think of a unitary science or a single all-comprehensive system of explanation in science in terms of some key-concepts. This has proved rather a visionary idea, and some recent scientists have replaced it by the idea of a unified science, which will interrelate the sciences through the use of a common physicalistic or 'thing' language. Every term of the different sciences will have to be reduced to the physicalistic terms, or every science is to be reduced to the basic science, physics. The task is gigantic, and it is doubtful how far biology, psychology and the social sciences can be reduced to physics. None the less, the move for such a unity of science illustrates the general spirit of science for effecting higher and higher synthesis of our experience.

This urge for greater synthesis of experience has resulted in the construction of very abstract theories which have no definite denotation, but are indirectly and partially interpreted and confirmed by a range of observational data. The idea that some scientists at one time entertained, namely, that an explanatory theory must be capable of direct observational verification, like the bacilli or Neptune, cannot be maintained in the face of our present scientific practice. The idea that these abstract hypotheses may be subsequently replaced by a set of observational terms, and therefore may be treated as a scaffolding to the scientific structure, is also not supported by the scientific practice of our day, which admits these abstract theories as unavoidably vague and indefinite in denotation, that is, in direct and explicit definition, and yet indispensable for scientific comprehension of experience.

This situation in scientific research has led to the reconstruction of the natural language. As the scientist operates with certain ordinary terms, like intelligence, social status, energy, field, etc., to correlate evermore effectively his increasingly wide and complex experience, he continually redefines these terms, endowing them with more import than they originally possessed. Thus there is a language-shift as the ordinary language is employed for scientific purposes, and it gains in theoretic import. The relation between the pre-scientific and the technical meanings of a term or statement becomes very tenuous, and sometimes the two are alienated. This produces much confusion in the mind of the layman. Thus the terms force, atom, electron, wave, space, time and matter in physics have changed their meanings almost beyond recognition. Not only that old concepts are given new scope and meanings, but new modes of speaking are introduced. The logical rules and the constants of thought, like space, time, substance and causality, have changed in new physics. The principles of knowledge, and so the linguistic frameworks, change with the contents of knowledge. Our imaginative and linguistic habits, which are formed to cope with a certain environment, for instance the macroscopic one, will fail outside this area, and will have to be modified if we become aware, through better and finer modes of perception, of a more extended environment, such as the microscopic and the megaloscopic ones revealed by new physics.

The present crisis in physics, consisting in the conflicts with the ideas of classical physics, is due to the failure of old modes of thought outside their legitimate field of application.

We can easily see how these three elements of the scientific spirit discussed above, namely, moves for greater synthesis, abstract theories and reconstruction of the older concepts and language, have philosophical potentiality. The scientist of our day cannot rest content with what is known as scientific integration of our experience, but must proceed beyond this towards the open horizon of an ideal comprehension by means of bolder and more abstract theoretical devices. Our scientific philosophy is the result of such a relentless extension of the scientific method in the understanding of our experience.

Elements of Contingency, Fallibility and Incompleteness

Modern science admits an element of contingency in nature, which is a bit loose-jointed and vague or indefinite in the extreme details. Physics admits the intrinsic impossibility of determining the quantitative features of any individual datum. Quantum mechanics finds it impossible to use a deterministic language in the description of the micro-world and maintains the necessity of describing aggregates and probabilities of events in this region. These descriptions are like statements in a game of chance. Yet a rational theory, and so science, is made possible because of the actual prevalence of order over chaos. The laws of the inanimate macro-bodies are *practically* deterministic, because they describe large masses of micro-boides and, so, their average or mean behaviours. Scientific knowledge, thus, does not mean a strict rational ordering of the ultimate details of nature, but only a rough and idealized representation of the gross or statistical behaviour of these occurrences. The scientific or theoretic world-picture is thus different from the historical one which is experiential and, therefore, full of breaks and uncertainties, containing an element of spontaneity, as in the micro-bodies of organic matter, and of choice and decision, as in those of the higher centres of the human brain. Thus the ideal of a thorough mechanistic science has proved mythical, and the physicist has to supplement his physical reality by aspects of actuality or historicity. The physics of the micro-world gives us only a large-scale account of this region, which is historical or full of contingent incidents. The macro-world is more or less a deterministic one, because large numbers of micro-bodies co-operate here, and their individual differences are averaged out. But a contingency can, in principle, invade this region also; a single contingent behaviour in the micro-world underlying it, such as a random movement of an electron or a neutron, can result in a sudden click in a Geiger counter or burst of an atom bomb. Human preferences and decisions, which are ultimately irreducible facts, find their expression through the micro-bodies of the brain, which, through multiplication of effects, may be imagined to bring about a change in the macro-world. Since new physics allows a certain latitude of indeterminacy to the micro-bodies, it can admit human free will, which can now be pictured to manifest itself through the body in the manner described above. In the same manner, new physics can allow spontaneous and co-ordinated growth of organic matter, which shows that micro-bodies are ruled by some over-all plan, besides the deterministic physico-chemical laws which may be only serving this plan in its execution.

The theoretical world-picture of science is thus an idealized one, which helps us to expect certain average results from certain situations (as in weather forecasting) or from certain physical conditions deliberately brought about by our free efforts (as in experiments and engineering). We are always aware of the elements of randomness, spontaneity and free will in the domains respectively of micro-physics, biology and introspective psychology. These domains fall out of the theoretical picture and delimit its scope and validity. As we noted earlier, science cannot logically prove universal and strict causality; it merely shows that there are *some* regular co-existences and sequences of events. So that contingent and free purposive behaviours in the world are not forbidden by science, but rather made plausible by its developments in micro-physics.

Science also allows that it is ever open to error. This principle of fallibility or corrigibility is the consequence of the inductive method of science. Since a certain theory rests on a limited number of observations that indirectly verify it, the theory can never be a certainty. There is always the possibility of another theory being devised which can account for a wider area of observations in the field and, so, be more acceptable. This hold in the case of the physical geometries also which seem to be *a priori* true and incorrigible. Modern analysis and physical researches have shown that, in so far as the Euclidean geometry is a mere definitional system in pure mathematics, it is *a priori*, but only formally true; while, in so far as it claims to describe our physical world as an empirical theory in physical geometry, it is open to revision, and has been, in fact, replaced by a non-Euclidean geometry of the Reimannian form which does more justice to the empirical situation. Since the world of observable data is an open system, the scientist cannot be sure of his theories which take care of these data and which, therefore, he offers not in the manner of a prophet as sure hits, but in that of a gambler as best bets. This element of uncertainty in scientific knowledge, instead of dampening the scientist, inspires him with the desire to improve his world-picture by continual revision. He is like one working at a sort of jigsaw puzzle, trying scheme after scheme to reach the most satisfactory one under the present set of observational data. No hard and fast rule can determine the course of his search and give him quick, interpersonally acceptable results. The rules of logical simplicity and comprehensiveness are there to help the scientist to choose amongst a number of rival theories in a field, but such rules are not very clear and unambiguous in their working, and an element of free choice always enters in this matter.

So that the scientist has to be tough-minded enough to admit this situation in his discipline; he has to work within the framework of an incomplete world-view. Knowledge for him is ever open to the infinite horizon, ever a reaching forward towards completion, but never an arrival at it. We shall see how significant this feature of scientific spirit is from our point of view. It leads science to philosophize, without a blind effort at absolute certitude and completeness in respect of the results. Such a blind predilection drives one to dogmatism and obscurantism and tends to produce in others a distaste for philosophy. Philosophy must be a free venture and a vision, and it must not be afraid of uncertainty of its results. The spirit of science helps this genuine philosophic spirit to develop. It teaches us that reality is not so much an antecedent and finished state of affairs to be discovered as a viewpoint or conceptual framework to be invented which may help one to place the so far observed data into the best possible order. Since the world of data is an open system and not a closed and finished affair, and since there is much scope for individual choice and decision in regard to judgment on the comparative worth of a certain viewpoint or conceptual framework, one cannot sensibly speak of certainty and incorrigibility of one's philosophical views. There is no end to one's continual efforts at improving one's philosophy in response to new data coming to light and fresh concepts or theoretical devices arising in the mind. And there can be no ultimate rational judgment on the rival philosophies, for much depends in this matter on one's taste and temperament rather than on any universally valid reason. Vedānta or any philosophy can be justified on rational grounds only up to a certain point, beyond which one's psychological and cultural factors enter to determine one's preference. Vedānta recognizes this human or existential element in philosophy, as it prescribes certain rules of conduct and psychological make-up of the mind for the fruitful study of Vedānta philosophy. We must note this important feature of any serious philosophy, and we have shown how modern science possesed this. So it is a fit prolegomenon to genuine philosophical enterprise.

Search for Universality

Science seeks objectivity not in the sense of immediate verifiability of its objects, but in the sense of their greater interpersonal validity or universality. This follows from the situation already noted that science seeks to construct abstract theories to comprehend our experience and the gap between a theory and its indirectly verifying experiences is very big indeed. Now a theory gains in universality by virtue of its capacity to correlate and to be confirmed by a large number of experiential data distributed over many minds, while a single first-person experience has no such universality, though much feeling of immediacy and givenness is associated with it. Thus scientific method aims at sublimating, as far as possible, the individual points of view and developing a universal outlook. It stresses empirical import of theories and thus checks empty or idle theories that cannot be tested against observational data; but it is above any narrow empiricism and verificatory principle of meaning and truth of concepts, which demands a direct verification of a concept.

As we observed earlier in the essay, modern science has liberalized the early empirical or positivistic notion of verification and has admitted a principle of confirmation or partial, indirect and conditional verification. Thus, though the Relativity theory shows that one's reading of spatial and temporal distances and of mass differ with one's individual motion—since one cannot know any absolute motion, these readings are only relative to one another—still the theory has evolved a concept of public space-time , of which the different private space-times are but cross-sections. The general theory of Relativity offers us the concept of a curved space, whose structure depends on the distribution of matter in the universe and which allows us to interrelate and predict the different measurements of objects that may be made by different observers. So that the very abstract concept of space-time-matter advanced by Einstein is, in one sense, truer than the actual space, time and matter given in commonsense. It is truer by virtue of its greater capacity to order a large number of private spatio-temporal and gravitational experiences.

Science treats the physical objects like chairs and tables as more real than the sense-data because of the same principle of objectivity, namely, that the more interpersonally confirmable or acceptable concept is more objective than a less one, though the latter may be more immediately given in one's experience. In conceiving and accepting as more real the abstract concepts of science, the scientist rises above his individual point of view and realizes the power and scope of scientific knowledge that enables him to comprehend a mass of phenomena under some concepts. The aim of philosophy, too, is this transcendence of individual views to develop universal ones. However, as we noted before and shall explain in the sequel, philosophy, in our sense, also recongizes the element of individuality and freedom underlying any philosophical view. A philosopher of our ideal type recognizes both these moments in philosophic enterprise. He seeks to reach a universal point of view and yet respects his own and other's individual freedom. Therefore gentle persuasion and teaching through one's personal example and love are more important means of philosophical communication than either arguments or psychological compulsion.

The Deontological Standpoint

We have already observed this feature of science. Science does not have any metaphysical commitment. It speaks of objects being real or unreal, existing or non-existing in the sense of their present fruitfulness or adequacy, or their opposites, in organizing the perceptual data in any sector of enquiry, under the existing aims and attitudes working in the particular field. Some logicians seem to believe in the ontological ground of logical laws, and they assert that these laws reflect the invariant traits of reality or of all possible worlds. But, as modern analysts have shown, we cannot prove this assertion, for the simple reason that this reality must be first conceived and, so, logic incorporated into it, in order to see whether it proves or disproves the logical laws. Since we cannot do without the logical laws, we cannot possibly prove or disprove them. The needs of our communication make these laws appear necessary, and we tend to interpret this necessity as suggestive of some ontological structure of the world. We cannot get out of our present logical mode of thinking to think of any possible world that may either support or falsify it, and this circumstance in our cultural history is misinterpreted as the result of our being acted upon by the permanent features of reality. At least, modern science subscribes to this deontological view of logic; and we know, Vedānta also treats all logic and empirical science as but names and forms, having no ultimate reality. We shall see how Vedānta may be said to hold the same deontological attitude to Brahman, which is, after all, an explanatory principle to be judged by its capacity to account for our experiences. At least, the Vedānta philosophers must offer this highest principle as a scientific one to the general student of philosophy, who cannot be expected to have either a starting faith in the Upaniṣads or a first-hand experience of Brahman.

As in regard to logical laws, so in regard to other conceptual entities of science; they have no ontological import, but only a methodological one. They represent what are more or less acceptable in scientific discourse by virtue of their greater adequacy as devices for integrating experience in their respective fields. This adequacy is no evidence for the ontological import of the concepts concerned, for the ontological question can be answered by 'Yes' or 'No' (either the entities exist or do not), while adequacy is a matter of degree.

The first stage of scientific philosophy

Introductory

As we said at the outset, we shall reflect critically and constructively, following the spirit of science, on the creed of science, in order to develop a scientific philosophy. Now the element of the creed of science that seems most significant for us, in view of its philosophical potentiality, is that relating to knowledge. Science believes in some extra-mental entities corresponding to its sense-data, physical objects and abstract theories, though it does not posit these entities as absolute realities. Science seeks to integrate our sense– experiences in terms of these entities, which are considered to possess physical characters, though we do not precisely know the latter. Now a scientist might as well seek to integrate experience in terms of some other kinds of entities. These may be postulated to explain the process of perception. A scientific or causal explanation of perception naturally leads one to imagine some non-perceptible objects at the back of our sense-data. These are the differential conditions of our perception, such that we sense different qualities with the same psycho-somatic apparatus or organs because of a difference in them. We see one thing red and another blue because of some difference in the nature of the underlying stuff of the things in question. So that we can now explain the features of the sensible world in terms of those of this non-sensible one underlying it. Thus a realistic theory of knowledge being the implicit creed of science, and a search for conceptual device to comprehend any process being the essence of scientific enquiry, a scientist cannot but arrive at an account of the sensible experiences as indicated above. This is the representational realism of the British philosopher Locke, and is admitted by many modern thinkers. The inference to the unexperienced cause of experienced effects is logically gratuitous, no doubt, but quite in keeping with the scientific spirit which adopts the hypothetico-deductive method, which does not demand direct verifiability of the hypothetical entities. This representational theory of perception can be imagined after any non-symbolical representative mechanism we are acquainted with, such as the television. The theory also explains the situation of perceptual error, which, according to it, is due to the abnormal state either of the physical environment (such as hot desert air causing mirage) or of psycho-somatic conditions (such as jaundice producing pale vision or fear of snakes producing illusion and hallucination of snakes). It, of course, also explains the overwhelming interpersonal agreement in our perceptions, which situation makes a common world and communication possible.

Scope and Worth of This Philosophy

But this philosophical theory does not go very far towards unification of our experience, for it practically duplicates the sensible world and, so, multiplies, instead of diminishing, entities. The imperceptible world with certain structural properties is isomorphous with the sensible world, which is the mental correlate of the former. We can conceive of this background world as a very much condensed system, having one-to-one relation with our sensible world that represents it on a vast scale, but this simplicity in size and mechanism cannot bring about any significant philosophical implication or logical economy. Besides, there are some other difficulties in the view. First, the remote cause of a sense-datum is said to be where the latter is located, but its immediate cause is the movements in the brain cell. How can the mind transcend its immediate surroundings to leap to a remote terminal of a long chain of causation? Secondly, how can extra-mental objects cause sense – experiences which are mental? The problem of mind and matter remains unexplained in this theory. Thirdly, the mind can form vivid sensible objects without any excitation from outside, as our imagination, dreams and hallucinations prove. So that an extra-mental stuff does not seem to be the cause of perception.

Thus perception cannot be regarded as explainable in terms of some extra-mental physical reality, and even if it be allowed, the hypothesis does not serve us much to understand the perceptual world, its variety and unity. So this manner of thinking constitutes only the first stage of scientific philosophy, which, on further reflection, leads one to higher stages.

The second stage of scientific philosophy

General Features of This Philosophy

Instead of postulating a physical entity behind the sensible world to explain its features, we may, more reasonably, postulate an Overmind, holding us under a hypnotic spell and making us perceive intersubjectively and intersensually things in a regular manner. This regularity is such that the sensible objects follow some rule of correlation with our bodily positions and conditions of the sense-organs, nervous system and psychical states, and with other objects which are either actual or possible perceptions. This regular correlation leads us to think that our bodies and psychical states (e.g. attention and memory) have a causal part to play in perception, but we forget that the bodies and psychical states are themselves but perceived objects. As Berkeley showed us, the realistic faith that the objects exist outside the mind on there own account, whether we perceive them or not, is produced in us, because we find them beyond the control of our personal deliberation and will. This givenness or compulsion of the objects is the work of the universal hypnotizer.

The hypnotic influence consists in making the subject see an object and believe it to be really there, which is but projected by him under the promptings of a superior mind. To strengthen the realistic faith in objects, the universal hypnotizer produces them in such a regular and universal manner that the real existence of the objects becomes a natural thought to explain the agreement and difference of percepts of different persons in terms of the similarity and difference of their bodily positions and conditions of sense-organs. The free but consistent will of some cosmic mind, then, explains the regularity in the sense-objects, the laws of nature and the laws of perspective, and also the agreement and disagreement amongst our individual percepts. This mind causes hallucinations, so to say, in the individual minds in a systematic manner, so that they may learn from experience the signs for certain correlated sensible appearances and act accordingly. This is what Berkeley saw, and he, not without reason, identified this Overmind with God.

At the second stage of our philosophy, we are happy to find a like nature, a mind, as the cause of all things and their governor. Brute nature frightens us. We can now feel homely and embrace life with trust and hope, and may even worship and pray. For, now, we find in nature and in our own bodies the stamp of an all-knowing creative intelligence that has given ample evidence of its concern for its creatures. This world-view is much relieving to a scientific philosopher, for science, uninformed by this philosophy, pictures a vast and indifferent world into which man has stumbled.

Some Parallel Philosophical Views Offered by Modern Scientists

Sir James Jeans argues for a theistic philosophy raised on science thus. Modern physics is now mathematical, and, mathematics being pure *a priori* thought, a super-mathematical mind, God, must be at the back of the world as its creator. This argument is defective, for, first, nature has not been exhaustively found to be mathematical; biological processes are not reducible to mathematical formulas, but show some element of spontaneity and contingency, and this, we saw before, is allowed by new quantum physics. Secondly, mathematical formula applies to nature which is not itself a formula, and, so, the argument at best proves a mathematical designer of the world, not its creator. However, since one could not design something according to one's own will unless the material worked upon is pliable like one's own imaginations, we can think of God as the creator of the world. So that Jeans is very near our second stage of scientific philosophy. The proof of God he gave from the second law of thermodynamics and the theory of production of cosmic rays from the annihilation of matter need not be described here, for it rests on some controversial results of science.

Eddington argues that sensible objects are produced by the mind out of the meagre messages from a non-sensible one by means of its own *a priori* ideas. The scientific objects are also similarly constructed, for they are posited to explain the sensible data. The world of sense and science is thus a mental construct, and it must have a substratum which cannot be but consciousness, which alone we know immediately and which is active in sensible and scientific world-building. This manner of arriving at some spiritual reality underlying the world by an analysis of our perception is much like that adopted by our second stage of scientific philosophy. Only, Eddington has not made it clear whether this spiritual reality is man's own individual consciousness or that of some superhuman universal being. The mind that constructs out of the elements supplied to it must recognize some other reality, and, since it cannot conceive how a material object can act upon it, it is led to postulate an Overmind as this other reality. Since there is much agreement and interrelation in the experiences of different minds, this Overmind must be a single spirit, causing these experiences. Eddington has not seen this side of the problem and has fallen into empirical idealism, which is contradictory to his initial position that the mind knows the world. In knowing the world, the mind may contribute much to the latter, but the world cannot be its creation. Kant saw this point, when he declared that the mind makes nature, but does not create it. He was aware of an extra-mental thing-in-itself as the source of the sensuous material of knowledge. Eddington missed this realistic aspect of knowledge, because he confused the physical world with the world of physics and the object symbolized with the symbol. Science must be concerned with some extra-mental reality described by scientific symbols rather than with these symbols. This reality beyond the symbols may very well be conceived as a super-mind on the analogy of our own mind, for we can think of a mental cause of perceptual data rather than of a material one, and we have the experience of a hypnotizer prompting persons to perceive and think things as he chooses.

Thus Eddington could also reach the conclusions of the second stage of our scientific philosophy, had he consistently developed his line of thinking.

Einstein reaches certain idealistic conclusions by reflecting on one situation in scientific knowledge. He believes that the concepts of science are free creations of the scientist's mind and yet they apply to an alien world. So that there must be some pre-established harmony between the mind and the world, which is thus not essentially alien to the mind. But Einstein did not develop his thought in this line and did not speculate on the possible explanation of this situation. Had he done so, he might have offered the hypothesis of a divine mind which causes the sensible appearances in our minds and also the ideas to bring them to order; some of the ideas appear to be freely welling up in the mind, while others appear to be suggested by nature.

Scope and Worth of the Second Stage of Scientific Philosophy

The cosmic mind of this phase of philosophy is a postulate to explain certain features of our experience. It is not asserted as a necessary or metaphysical entity. This is in keeping with the scientific spirit that guides our present philosophical enquiry. The postulate of a cosmic mind serves to explain the non-necessary and provisional character of all natural laws and the elements of contingency, spontaneity and purposiveness admitted by modern science. The laws are legislated by the free cosmic mind, and so cannot be necessary but only regular, depending on the sweet will of their author. The elements of contingency, spontaneity and purposiveness express the freedom and intelligence of the cosmic mind. Science or empirical knowledge is the record of the existing rules, according to which the spirit causes certain systematic perceptions in our collective mind, while there are many other perceptions caused in our and animal minds which do not concern us, because they are unsystematic and biosocially not so very important. So that what is real for us is decided by its relative expediency in our biosocial affairs, and it is not a matter of so-called apprehending the Truth or Reality in any ultimate sense. Again, we find, at this stage of our philosophy, that the perceptual objects are but hallucinations in our minds caused by the cosmic spirit, and, so, there is no material substance and no absolute space-time. Thus, our scientific philosophy of the second stage supports and explains some of the tenets of modern science, viz. those relating to causality, substance, space-time, and an open and provisional world-view.

The precise nature of this cosmic mind is not known, but it cannot be endowed with any particular character, such as mathematical, artistic, or ethical, for the mind itself should be apart from the qualities it creates. The cosmic mind is to be conceived as possessing potentiality to manifest diverse characters in the world, those observed so far and those that may be observed later on. So that this cosmic mind be imagined as possessing inexhaustible potentialities, of which only some are seen actualized at the moment through the medium of our minds. This cosmic mind cannot itself be in space and time, which are its creations; only we, who live through or traverse them, find them to be extensive and successive respectively. The Overmind or God sees them in one aspect, as we imagine the path of the earth round the sun or the law of gravitation of bodies in a timeless sense.

This second stage of scientific philosophy, then, appears to support, co-ordinate, and explain in terms of the concept of a cosmic mind or God, the otherwise loosely knit and superficial elements of the philosophical creed of science. The world is viewed as an expression of a supermental will in the medium of our mind, which must be treated as somehow akin and subordinate to this supermind to be used by it. The modern researches in parapsychology make this hypothesis of a cosmic hypnotizer plausible. A whole group of minds is sometimes found to be telepathically united in a common image-making theme sharing a hallucinatory world. So that we can very easily picture God as a superhypnotizer.

But the difficulties of this theistic sort of philosophy are patent, and become quite disturbing at a certain stage of critical reflection. God's mind may be regarded as self-existing or, in our deontological terminology, a first principle, but our individual minds have to be treated as dependent on, and derived from, it, for how else can God act upon us to produce the hallucinations? But if He is to act upon us in this manner, He must be somehow in our minds, for how can an external mind influence our minds? The hypnotizer's mind must be essentially at one with the minds of the hypnotized. Another difficulty is that this second philosophy does not advance our understanding of nature very far, for we have merely postulated a world of ideas in God's mind to explain our sensible world, and, so, have duplicated the latter world, instead of reducing it to some fewer principles. Of course, the postulate of God's mind, which produces and holds these ideas together, and His free will and creative joy may help us to understand how and why these ideas are collected and are at all there. But such understanding is not fully satisfying, for we are apt to ask, How can God be imagined to create the individual minds? The hypnotizer of our common experience does not produce the individual minds. So the analogy seems to break down. Critical reflection will take us beyond this second philosophy to a third one, where another analogical hypothesis will prove a better device to connect and understand the various features of our experience.

The Third and Final Stage of Scientific Philosophy

The Main Principle: The Dream Analogy

To improve the situation discussed in the last section, we may conceive God's mind as our real and fundamental mind, our empirical minds being modes of it, as one's dream mind is a mode of one's waking mind. So that this philosophical theory replaces the analogy of the telepathic hallucination by autosuggestion found in dreams and imaginative recreations.

When one catches oneself dreaming, as it happens when one just rises from one's dream, or one's temporary fantasy-thinking or day-dreaming into which one slips even in the midst of one's work, one is aware of two minds in one's self. One mind causes certain perceptions in the other which takes them for given realities, while the former mind enjoys them from behind and remembers them when they are gone with the dissolution of the dream and the dream mind. The dream mind, for instance, blindly and passively suffers the pleasure and pain, the hopes and fears of the dream world; but the individual waking mind, which is not really asleep or quenched during the dream, and which excites the dream objects, often with elaborate artistry, subtly and actively enjoys the sufferings of the dream mind. This interpretation of the phenomenon of the dream may be confirmed by a little introspection, and the modern theory of dreams as wishful thinking supports it.

Again, the fact that we are sometimes struck by some extreme absurdity of a dream situation, and begin to doubt it even in the dream and eventually wake up, and the fact that we can wake up from sleep at an intended time support our theory of two minds involved in the dream. Now, these two minds are but two aspects of a single mind, one the original waking mind and the other its dream mode. The mind in a dream state assumes a self-forgetful and passive mode, takes the self-projected objects for real ones, and suffers the feelings associated with them, instead of enjoying them as fun. Something of this kind occurs in our aesthetic state also, when we are said to enjoy disinterestedly the objects and feelings depicted in some piece of art. The duality of our mind in such a situation is very manifest, for we both weep for and delight in the sufferings of a tragic hero in a theatre. We do not rush to help the hero on the stage, for we are aware that it is a make-believe affair, yet we are not totally indifferent to him. We have two modes of awareness in one person or two selves in one body.

They are not wholly separate, rather one is the assumed mode of the other.

We can now think in an analogical manner of the universal mind, said to be causing perceptions in our minds, as immanent in us, our individual minds being so many assumed modes, largely unself-conscious. So that the difficulty, felt in the second stage of our philosophic venture, about the externality of the cosmic mind is overcome. Again, the charge of duplication of the perceptual objects by means of God's ideas is avoided, for now our own mind, so to speak, projects the perceptual world directly without the mediation of the ideas. Moreover, some crucial facts support this theory rather than the theistic one.

We can well imagine that the degree of the unself-consciousness of the cosmic spirit in its assumed modes may vary with the latter, so that while some individuals may be quite unaware of the world being their own projection, others may have an awareness in various degrees of this situation. Now, while many saints and philosophers felt and spoke of their utter dependence on God for everything, there have been many, particularly in the East, who realized a sense of identity with God. The Upaniṣads have affirmed this identity between the individual and the universal Spirit. 'Thou art That' is the message of the Upaniṣads. Śaṅkara, Madhusūdana, and other thinkers of the Advaita school have sought to strengthen this message with rational arguments, while a long line of saints have claimed to have realized its truth. Rabindranath Tagore, the poet-philosopher of modern India, believed in and sang of the God-man (*Nara-Nārāyaṇa*) with the *Bāuls* of Bengal, a sect of mendicant friars. He rightly commented on the Christian faith that the absolute transcendence of God over man and the world is not that which Christ and other Christian mystics preached. Christ says, 'I and my Father are one'; and St. Anselm writes of 'the God-man who is necessary for salvation of man and who cannot be made by the conversion of the one into the other or the co-mixture of both into a third, defacing both', and stresses that 'the same person shall be perfect God and perfect man'. It seems that the experience of God as a transfiguration, and not a transportation from the finite and the temporal to the infinite and the eternal, from becoming to being, is what the Jews originally believed in. The Greeks, particularly the Platonists, changed this original faith in an immanent God.

Further supports of our theory are provided by instances of supernormal mental powers, such as extra-sensory perception, precognition, thought-reading, thought-transference, hypnotism and psycho-kinesis. One eminent worker in para-psychology, which deals with such phenomena, ends his book with the remark that the possibility of mystical divine union and of immortality springs from the very nature of human personality (G. N. Tyrrell, *The Personality of Man*).

The Nature and Scope of This Theory

We must not be dogmatic and ontological in this theory, which is offered in a scientific spirit as a postulate, picturable on the analogy of our dreams and aesthetic experience, and more or less adequate in co-ordinating and understanding our experience. The mystical experiences mentioned above are only partially confirmatory of our hypothesis, which may have to be revised in the light of some fresh and more pervasive kind of experience. The experience of the mystics cannot settle the issue, for who can tell that they touched the bottom of experience?

Seen in the light of this philosophical theory, the scientific quest is but after structures or plans of things that are projected by our own essential or foundational mind which prompts and enjoys this quest from behind. There is no external substance to be discovered as realized by modern scientists. The older ones, therefore, were more self-forgetful modes of our Overmind. The gradual awareness on the part of modern scientists about the illusory nature of substance, of causality, of absolute and infinite space and time, and of absolute determinacy and completeness of a world-picture, is to be interpreted in our philosophy as a manifestation of a gradual self-recollection of the cosmic spirit through them. The spirit comes back to its own self in the scientist as he reflects upon his discipline. In fact, philosophic reflection of the right sort, which seeks to delve into our obvious experiences to expose their underlying hidden structures and to picture them by suitable analogies or models, is, in this philosophy, to be interpreted as the rising of the cosmic spirit in the reflective philosophers from the dream of life. 'Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting', said Wordsworth; and Plato, too, believed in such a state of affairs. Empirical knowledge is thus a process of self-awareness on the part of the self-oblivious spirit, which loves to lose itself into a world of dream to beguile itself, but which is never totally lost, and loves to come back by stages to its original self-awareness. The scientists and the philosophers represent in their intellectual search the different degrees of the awakening of the spirit. We shall see in the sequel how the moral, aesthetic and religious men also represent in their activities the same process of awakening, in which, we think, consists the cultural advance of humanity.

The sceptical tendency in modern scientific thought, which does not have faith in strict determinism, substance, certainty and completeness of empirical knowledge, is the mark of true insight in the thinkers who are rising to the awareness of the essential freedom of the cosmic mind immanent in them. This mind, being rational and purposive, as we postulate, explains the marvellous order and uniformities in the worldly phenomena, but it being a free creative spirit, there is no real necessity behind the regularities observed in nature and no bar against contingency and spontaneity. Freedom and chance are thus basic features, while necessity and rule, which science adopts as its methodological presuppositions, are only provisional, though pervasive, aspects of the world. These conceptual schemes of science or categories of the empirical mind are no more than mental habits, as Hume would maintain, and they may change with different cultures or stages of evolution of the mind. Kant's idea of a fixed human nature or rationality and, so, of permanent and necessary categories, is a piece of dogma unsupported by our experience and critical thought. The categories are mental moulds into which our experience is put as it is received by our mind, and, as such, they must be relative and not absolute. The revision of the basic categories of thought in modern science supports this view about them and brings us at their edge to conceive of a cosmic mind that is above the categories and creative of them. This mind is unspeakable in empirical terms; it is the formless spirit or Brahman of the Upaniṣads, who is described as the eternal, the pure, the free and as full of extraordinary bliss. These characters are not empirical. We are led to think of them as characteristics of the cosmic spirit immanent in us, because this spirit, as the author of all empirical characters, cannot itself be the subject of any one of them. The characters attributed to Brahman in the Upaniṣads have their faint analogies in our empirical experience, but they have to be conceived as of a transcendental order.

The Relation of This Philosophy to Traditional Mysticism

The basic tenets of our scientific philosophy agree with those of the Upaniṣads and some other mystical faiths. Of course, we believe in a non-dualistic interpretation of the Upaniṣads, such as is offered by

Śaṅkara and his followers, including Swami Vivekananda of modern India.

The method we have followed in our philosophical inquiry is, positively, that of analogy , and negatively, that of cancelling the analogy to posit a non-empirical entity. This is the method of science at an advanced stage, where we have to understand some complex phenomena with the postulate of a suitable model, and yet have to reject almost all the characters of the postulated entity that our analogical or pictorial thinking prompts us to attribute to it. The case of the electron or the wave in new quantum mechanics is in point. This is also more or less the method followed by Aquinas, who employed both analogy and the way of negation. This is also the implicit method of the Upaniṣadic seers, who, while engaged in explaining their insights to us, lead us to the thought of an absolute spirit on the analogy of empirical objects, only to cancel the empirical features in it thus introduced for the sake of exposition only. This procedure is known in Vedānta philosophy as *adhyāropāpavāda*, meaning figurative superimposition followed by subsequent negation.

Thus Brahman is said to be known in a sense, but not known in another. Brahman is known, as the *Kena Upaniṣad* (II. 4) says, in every empirical knowledge as its condition; and Aquinas, too, wrote, 'All cognitive agents know God implicitly in everything they know' (*De Veritate*). Here the analogy of a support to a thing is implicitly assumed. Brahman is not known as an ordinary thing is known, but it is also not unknown for that reason. We know the transempirical feature of the world on the analogy of an empirical situation, with the awareness that it is but an analogical knowledge that we have and that the entity or principle itself is never known in its own nature. Brahman is conceived of on the analogy of our own mind that works in our dreams from behind. But we cannot really know, in the strict sense of direct verificatory acquaintance, this cosmic principle and its characters, like freedom, creativity, purity and bliss.

We cannot understand by the analogy of our dream situation how the cosmic mind adopts a dream mode in which every dream mind feels itself to be conscious. In our dreams, we cannot speak of other persons we dream about to be conscious beings. So that the cosmic mind has to be thought of to a large extent abstractly without any analogy from our familiar experience. We can have very remote analogy from the artistic activity of a dramatist, who, while writing a play, may be said to be at once assuming the roles of various characters, which are so many diverse modes or poses of one single person underlying them.

We can also think of the case of a multiple personality in this connection. Because of this transcendent character of cosmic principle, the Upaniṣadic seers and the Vedāntic philosophers stress the need of a direct verification of it in some extraordinary kind of experience.

As explained at the outset, we do not attach much importance to this part of the programme, for ours is a scientific philosophy, where the remote possibility of direct verification of our postulated entities does not increase the validity of the theory, which mainly rests on its adequacy as an explanatory principle. Though we do not deny this possibility of direct verification and also the psycho-social need for it, yet we do not think that we can have for our theory as much inter-subjective verification as we have for public objects. So that we, as scientific philosophers, must be content with the adequacy and plausibility of our theory, which can never be asserted as a final truth and reflective of some invariant ontological trait of nature. In keeping with the scientific method and spirit, the philosophic theory of the cosmic mind immanent in our individual minds is but an abstract postulate, having only a faint and remote analogy in our experience, which is to be understood and validated in terms of the observable features of the world that appear to be co-ordinated and explained by this postulate. It is meaningful by virtue of the above situation, and so in a special and restricted sense only. It is certainly meaningless in the sense of direct and complete verifiability or intuitability.

The Vedic mystics might have meant by the ontological being or reality of Brahman their absolute faith in Brahman as the explanatory principle of the universe and in the extreme good of humanity in accepting this principle. So that the obviously descriptive statements in the indicative mood in regard to the principle may be taken to stand really for descriptions of the personal faith of the mystics and of their value judgments and prescriptions. There is a controversy within the Upaniṣadic tradition itself over the question whether the aphoristic statements of the seers that read like statements of facts are to be taken in their literal sense or as injunctions. Śaṅkara and other non-dualistic interpreters, whom we have followed in our reading of a non-dualistic philosophy in the Upaniṣads, have taken them in the literal and descriptive sense, thus making out of them an ontology. But this would make the Vedic seers and the Vedānta philosophers dogmatic, while a deontological and valuational interpretation put on the aphorisms of the seers regarding the ultimate principle would make them more open-minded. However, we need not concern ourselves much with this historical matter, and would rather hold in a neutral manner that, whatever the Vedic seers and the Vedānta philosophers might have really meant, we can always separate the two aspects of their teachings, one expressive of their personal experiences, faith, ontological assertion, and valuational judgment and prescriptions; and the other expressive of their strictly rational or scientific approach to the philosophical problem.

We believe that, from the point of view of an intellectual philosophy, which like science inquires into the secret of nature in a very open manner, resting on nothing but the ordinary experience of mankind in general, the second aspect of the teachings of the Vedic seers and the Vedānta thinkers is more significant. From this point of view, which is rather pedestrian, the extraordinary realizations and value-preferences and injunctions of some particular individuals, howsoever great otherwise, cannot contribute much to the validity of a principle, which must be treated as a theory of greater or less acceptability by virtue of its relative adequacy in correlating and explaining certain observable features of our experience. The modern scientist admits an element of choice and decision involved in the acceptance of a particular theory, which has, actually or possibly, several alternatives. So that he cannot assert his own theory as an objective truth, but only as a proposal or best postulate to be judged by others in terms of its adequacy or fruitfulness in comprehending our experience. A scientific statement can be shown to be but a proposal or prescription in the disguise of an assertion of a state of affairs, and the theory proposed has a wide fringe of vagueness and choice, in the sense that it is capable of further definition and development in the light of fresh facts and one's sense of relevancy of, or selective emphasis on, them in connecting them with the theory. Any scientific concept is thus open-textured, capable of re-definition. We have already noticed this aspect of science in the earlier parts of this essay.

We thus see that, though we do not claim any absolute certitude or truth for our philosophy, we can consider it as more reasonable than other philosophies which are not constructed, in the spirit of science, on the basis of a more intersubjectively acceptable experience and methodology. Our scientific philosophy thus seems to be more readily and universally acceptable than any other philosophy which banks too much on other kinds of experience and methods than those of science. And, fortunately for us, our philosophy, raised on science in a very open and straightforward manner, agrees with the basic teachings of the Vedic seers and the Vedānta thinkers. Those teachings and the tenets of our own philosophy thus support each other.

The Relation of This Philosophy to Our Cultural Disciplines

We have already noted that scientific and philosophical inquiry, which marks the evolution of the human mind, appears in the light of our philosophy to be a gradual awakening of the cosmic mind in us. It is the mind's recollecting of its own creations. Nescience is forgetting and science is reminiscence. For how can we know anything which is utterly foreign to us? Now, just as the cultivation of science and philosophy marks the progress of our mind from sleep to waking, so does the cultivation of arts, morals and religion. Artistic activity consists essentially in the disinterested contemplation of sensuous qualities and forms of things and of the emotive attitudes associated with human life. This means that the artist considers the world in a detached, impersonal manner with regard to its human aspect. Art humanizes nature, as Wordsworth told us; and we see that it is universal humanity with which the artist approaches and tinges nature. Moreover, the artist seeks to communicate to others his artistic inventions containing his insights into the human significance of the world, and thus his art unites him with others and his appreciators with one another. So that art unites mankind, as Tolstoy told us. Now, this impersonality and the sense of fraternity with the world humanized and intimately relished through art, and a feeling of oneness with others effected by it, are certainly conducive to our realizing the truth that the world of things and human beings is but the creation of our essential self. 'Beauty is the bridge between man and nature', said Tagore; and art as an expression of beauty must be helping us to the awareness of the essential oneness of ourselves and the world of objects. So art is an instrument of true culture, which, in our philosophy, consists in awakening us from the dream of life to an awareness of the world as our own imaginative play, and, so, to perfect knowledge, freedom, and power.

The moralist also represents an upward movement of our mind towards awakening from this dream of life. He, too, like the artist, curbs his individual self to go beyond it in sympathy and love to commune with others. Morality is self-socialization; it is a progress towards a realization of the highest truth about nature and life. Our capacity to take up the position of others and to share their joys and sorrows, as if they are ours, is an implicit proof of the validity of our philosophical position. Our individual selves, which are but dream modes of some one cosmic self, are not really self-subsisting entities, but derived ones; and this is shown in such moral experiences, as well as artistic ones, where our individual selves seem to burst their boundaries and melt into each other. So that moral practices and attainments are preludes to further spiritual progress, leading to the final awakening of the lower dream self to the higher wakeful one, the cosmic creative self.

Similarly, religion, in its essential form, being the expression of our yearning for unity with the spirit that creates and governs the world, is a sign of our awakening. Religious attainment is said to be a home-coming, and the God of religion is but the creative spirit of nature, whom the devotee seeks to realize as his very own. Many institutionalized religions regard God as our father, and they hold that we are as much dear and necessary to Him as He is to us. He dwells in us, and we dwell in Him. This is a very near approach to the monistic theory we have advanced here, which thus explains and justifies religion in terms of its transcendental psychology, just as it does other cultural disciplines, namely, science, philosophy, art and morality. Thus, religious practice, in its essential aspect and purified of its many affectations, is an important form of human culture.

Some Questions

We believe, and we have shown elsewhere, that this philosophy can also successfully answer the philosophical questions about the origin and nature of knowledge, about materialism *versus* idealism in metaphysics, and about the freedom and immortality of the self.

The intelligent reader of this essay, who may be interested in such more technical problems of philosophy, may himself guess our answers in the light of what he has learned about our fundamental theory. He can also settle for himself certain other questions that may arise in connection with our philosophy, for instance, the question of placement of actual dreams in our philosophical scheme. We have constructed our theory on the partial analogy of our dream experiences, but what about them? We may indicate briefly that they are generally expressions of our desires not finding expression in our waking life. Just as we do not ordinarily relish much of our waking experiences of life, which are (as said in our philosophy) enjoyed subtly from behind by our inner self, similarly much of our dream experiences appear unpleasant in the dream state, but are relished by our individual self. This can be certified by introspection. But there are many experiences and such marvellous constructions, and also some precognitive dreams, that cannot be owned by the individual self and must be ascribed to the cosmic self. This self, then, projects one order of objects to perceive in one dream mode, which is our waking state, and another order of objects to perceive in a second degree dream mode. Of the latter objects, however, some *appear* to be produced and enjoyed by the individual mind from behind. This creative activity and self-expression and aesthetic enjoyment of the individual self in dreams are only apparent and derivative from an ultimate point of view. The empirically observed creativity in, and enjoyment of, dreams with regard to the individual self forms the basis of our theory of the cosmic self as creative and enjoying, but, if the theory is accepted, the above characters of the individual self become illusory. So that we come to the interesting conclusion that, if our philosophical theory is true, then the empirical fact that forms the basis and working model of this theory is but an appearance. But the cosmic mind can well be credited with creating that appearance in our individual minds, in order that there may be a recollection or coming back of the individual self to the original one. The dream experience thus plays an important role in our life. By reflecting on it, we can very easily grasp the secret of our world and life and, so, eventually rise from the dream of life.

Another question that may arise in the mind of our readers and prove disturbing is related to the element of subjectivity that we have admitted in our philosophy, in spite of its being constructed on the basis of our ordinary public experience and its following the most acceptable method, that of science. This subjectivity is undeniable, for, even in advanced science, there is no clear intersubjective judgment to be had on the relative adequacy of a theory in respect of others. The principles of logical simplicity and comprehension are not sufficiently clear and unambiguous as working rules. So that complete objectivity is an unattainable ideal in science and scientific philosophy. But this element of subjectivity and freedom cannot upset a scientific philosopher, who must admit that the cosmic spirit that is coming to its own in our philosophic enterprise cannot be expected to be working uniformly in every mind. So, while some minds may be very quick and clear in their philosophic insights, others may be slow and confused. Thus disagreements are apt to be there in our philosophical conclusions. Our own philosophy is offered as a tentative proposal, and we do not know how far it will receive acceptance from others. Various elements of taste, temperament and cultural traits enter into one's philosophical construction, where, as we noted earlier, a sense of relevancy of facts or selective emphasis plays an important role. We cannot seize and eliminate all these underlying factors that influence our philosophical construction. Therefore it is that not argument nor coercion of any kind, but friendly persuasion should be the mode of philosophical communication. Our own method of philosophy starts from the common experience of man as follows the most universally acceptable scientific method in order to attain intersubjective validity, and we are aware of the subjective elements entering in our philosophy. We only hope that others will come to agree with it and thus reinforce our faith in our free choice and preference involved in our philosophy. Viewed in the light of this philosophy itself, our belief in a social criterion of truth and, so, adoption of the scientific method, and our hope for interpersonal acceptance of our theory, imply a belief that the cosmic spirit stages a come back through a large section of intellectual beings, who will sooner or later come to appreciate our theory that leads one's thought to this spirit beyond the veil of this dream or *māyā*.

Of course, we do not mean to say that our philosophy will have to be tested for its truth by the judgment of *all* sorts of people. Such a test cannot be demanded. A certain minimum agreement in aims and attitudes of life must be granted in persons in order that they may at all proceed to discuss fruitfully the issue we have raised in our philosophy here. We cannot possibly argue with and persuade gross materialists or radical positivists, who will not catch any sense in our deliberations. Thus viewed, truth is subjective to some extent, and total universality or social validity is an impossible ideal. In terms of our own philosophy, we will describe this situation as the result of the love of diversity of the cosmic spirit, which works so uniformly in many spheres, and yet produces so much diversity in the world, rare and uncommon things, accidents and contrary movements. So that, while some people are seen steadily to move towards an awareness of the spiritual truths and to their salvation, thus representing the withdrawal or come back on the part of the cosmic spirit from its dream state, others are sinking into the dream state. This mystery cannot be described in our traditional logic, for how can the same spirit both rise from and sink into its dream mode, or how can one assume many modes at once ? Here, we are faced with the problem of revising our traditional logic to suit our purposes; and in this matter, we can be guided by the example in recent physics. For the electron, too, of quantum mechanics seems to behave in a manner that can be described only in a three-valued logic and not in the two-valued 'either—or' one. In other words, the electron can be said to be at some particular place and yet not be exactly there, for it has a probability of being located there. Our cosmic spirit or Brahman can be lost in a dream mode in some individuals who are blind worldly people, opaque to any spiritual light, while it can be awakening at the same time in other people who are on the way to true enlightenment. We must note, however, that strictly speaking no one is totally blind and opaque, for every individual mind is after all a mode of the cosmic spirit, which may at any time choose to rise from the dream. Salvation of the individual self, thus, may be quite sudden or accidental, without any effort or preparation on his part.

In the light of our philosophy, then, everything we find in the universe is as it has been willed by Brahman and, so, good and beautiful from an ultimate point of view. Moreover, we individuals are but created and ruled by this cosmic will. So that no effort may be made by us to improve the state of things. But one must realize this ultimate truth and identify oneself with Brahman itself to be quite content with the world about oneself. One will then have no duty, but only a contemplative joy in one's life that will be like a dream. But short of this complete realization of the philosophic truth, one must feel the urge to act upon one's environment in order to change it. So that one must do honestly what one feels to be one's duty. To sit idle and take things as they are, to tolerate what one really believes to be evil, but insincerely calls passing shadows or illusions, is intellectual dishonesty and moral cowardice. One must rise to the highest point of our philosophical truth through the intermediate stages of mental culture that lead one from the ordinary mental outlook to the extraordinary one.

Thus, though we have not laid any stress on the matter of direct verification of our theory in one's experience for the reasons indicated before, namely, this experience must be of an extraordinary sort so far very difficult to obtain and even imagine in a sufficient measure by a good number of persons, yet such a verification is necessary for the application of this philosophy. For action, one needs firm personal faith in some world-view or philosophy, and this faith can be generated by a first-hand realization of the latter, which may first be taken as a theory with some provisional antecedent faith. The realization of the Vedic philosophy through *sādhanā* has been stressed by all the Vedic seers and the Vedānta philosophers and we whole-heartedly support them. Only, we would like to point out that, from our scientific point of view, this subsequent verification in personal experience, and, so, any possible falsification, too, has very little to influence the matter of validity of the theory, which rests on its adequacy as a suitable framework of concepts to co-ordinate and explain very indirectly some of the marked features of our experience. The verification or falsification is socio-psychologically significant for this simple reason that a theory, whether in science or in philosophy, is not held by the human mind in a purely theoretical attitude to satisfy one's intellectual curiosity only, rather it is quickly employed as a guide to action. Now, as we saw above, it is not fair and proper to put our philosophic theory to practice without a thorough realization of it, for it may then serve to justify one's dull inaction and cowardly submission to what one knows to be evil. We submit here that the realization of the truth of our philosophy or Vedānta can come gradually, as we honestly act and suffer in the world according to our best lights, provided we keep our minds constantly observant, reflective and open. It is thus that the mind is gradually lifted to a rarefied state and one gains the extraordinary vision of the principle that one initially entertained as a plausible theory.

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Vedānta–A Philosophy of World-understanding

The world today needs a philosophy comprehensive enough to include and reconcile from a higher standpoint the various conflicting philosophies with their diverse ideologies. This has been well-recognized in the second Inter-American Congress of Philosophy (held at Columbia University, New York City, in December 1947) where Cornelius Kruse (the Chairman) said, 'Particularistic philosophies no doubt effectively unite a given group, but they disintegrate the world. The task before philosophy and before us, its bearers and ministers, is to discover if possible whether we can co-operatively find a philosophy, or at least a philosophy in the making, that would unify the world.' In the present paper an attempt is made to construct the outlines of such an ideal philosophy, which, it will be evident, does not essentially differ from Vedānta.

Let us start from what we think the least philosophical but the most influential of the world philosophies, namely, logical positivism, which is ruling the scientists and other tough-minded classes of men. The logical positivists are empiricists believing only in sense-data and logic and holding metaphysics to be an idle speculation. They believe in positive science with its concepts having explicit and verifiable reference to sense-data and condemn self, substance, causality, etc., as pseudo-concepts having no factual content or verifiable meaning. Science is to them the only knowledge possible and it is but the sense-data systematized by logic (which includes mathematics). This logic too is but a set of conventions as to how to combine the data. And there may be many alternative logics leading to alternative systems out of which the simplest and the most inclusive is to be chosen as the true till a simpler and a more inclusive one is found. Thus there is no absolute truth, the criterion of truth being coherence and simplicity.

Now this philosophy, according to our viewpoint, is at the first stage of philosophical consciousness in which sense-experience alone is accepted as the ground and content of reality and discursive understanding as supplying some formal rules to order the mass of sense-experience. The formal part is held incidental and not essential to reality. But this outlook is incomplete. For it leaves many loose-ends or unanswered problems: (1) Why is this stream of sense-data and why are these logical forms to hold them together? (2) Why are there stability and uniformity in the sense-data and the same in the understanding that orders them into stable and uniform schemes? The first question leads to the problem of the source of sense-data (which itself cannot be a sense-data) and to the source of logical activity (which itself must be beyond logic). The former source is what is called matter or substance and the latter is mind. Both are metaphysical entities in the sense that they transcend sense-experience and logic. The first question thus leads to the metaphysical question of mind and matter and their relation. The second question leads to the problem of the categories such as substance and causality on the one hand and to that of an identical mind or consciousness on the other. These are presupposed by any account of positive science and a positivistic philosophy. Thus logical positivism logically leads to metaphysics which it forbids. It is, therefore, a partial philosophy that attains a certain degree of neatness and simplicity by limiting philosophical discourse. We cannot, however, rest satisfied with a fragmentary philosophy (which necessarily breeds a particularistic ideology) but must go ahead with the problems that issue from it.

So we plunge ourselves into the metaphysical problem of mind, matter and causality. Looked at from the first stage of philosophical awareness discussed before these are but hypothetical constructs of imagination having no basis in experience and are gratuitous; the description of experience in terms of verifiable concepts and laws is warrantable knowledge, the search for some underlying core or substratum of experience is chimerical and useless. But from a second stage of philosophical awareness this search is natural, and mind, matter and causality are not imaginative constructs but are ontological entities intuited by rational insight and, so, not less veridical than sense-data. These are not *a priori* and analytical like logical laws but are *a posteriori* and synthetic. And, so, they are like scientific laws which are necessary not in the logical sense in which any violation is inconceivable but in an empirical sense in which any violation is a miracle, or a freak of nature is not impossible in itself. Thus causality is an objective characteristic of reality and not a subjective rule for ordering our experience. As regards mind and matter they are the substances underlying the knowing activity (with its logical and mathematical rules and calculations) and the knowable objects respectively. The question of their relation leads us to the two rival philosophies, realism and idealism. The former holds the objects as independent of the mind while the latter holds them dependent on the mind. (Pragmatism and Marxism are respectively idealistic and realistic.) The solution of this age-old controversy can be found thus. On the empirical level of philosophical awareness (our second stage) the objects are certainly independent of the mind which knows not itself but something 'other' than itself. Śaṅkara has urged against the Buddhist subjective idealists (*Vijñānavādins*) his own empirical realism that fire cannot burn itself and the 'otherness' in objects known is given and cannot be explained away. Kant, too, was an empirical idealist (see his 'Refutation of Idealism' in his *Critique of Pure Reason*). If the object is what the mind makes it, how is it that we cannot see whatever we wish, for instance, cannot see a bird when faced with a tiger in a forest. So that at the stage of empirical knowledge we have to admit realism. But then we have also to answer some cognate questions. How is it that the mind knows an object which is other than itself? What is their relation in knowledge and in reality? These questions cannot be answered on the second stage of philosophical awareness we are so far dealing with. But that these questions are at all asked shows that there is a third stage of awareness implicit in the second. From the third stage one can view both mind and matter and grasp their relation. For this stage is a higher one transcending the duality of those relatively empirical entities of a lower grade of reality (*Lower* grade because explainable from and founded on a higher standpoint).

In this third stage both mind and matter are realized as bifurcated branches stemming from the Self which is one Self-identical consciousness, free and full of play (līlā). The figure of the tree is rather crude because mind-matter and the Self are in different planes of reality. The mind is the subjective attitude of the Self while matter is its objective or self-projecting attitude when empirical knowledge occurs. Just as the empirical mind can create dream objects so can the Self create empirically real objects of the waking consciousness. But the Self is only playing or dreaming while adopting these attitudes, so that there is no causal nexus or any continued identity between the Self and mind-matter. Thus it is that though a transcendental type of idealism asserting the ultimate identity of mind and matter is acceptable, it is confounding matters to argue for an empirical idealism holding objects of empirical knowledge (tables, chairs) to be but ideas or mental stuff. Transcendentally speaking they are one and the same but then they are not even seen as different and real. Empirically speaking they are real and different and not seen as identical. Śaṅkara insists that one has no right to declare the world as *māyā* unless and until he has *realized* it as such by realizing his Self as Brahman.The dream is real while one is dreaming and it is a dream only when he has awakened. However, since the waking experience is relatively more stable and on its basis the dream experience is explainable, it is a higher grade of reality. Similarly the Self is the higher reality relatively to mind (the knowing self) and matter (the knowable self). The *Upaniṣads* tell us to see the Self as real and nothing else, no differences, which are but names and froms, *māyā*. The Self is the Brahman, the highest reality which is indescribable by any known predicate for each represents a lower grade reality. The Self or Brahman, therefore, is describable only as 'not this, not this' (*neti*, *neti*).

We have thus tried to show how proceeding logically from the least speculative philosophy of our time (logical positivism), and finding its limitations and implications, we reach the two fundamental rival philosophies (idealism and realism), and from them to our ideal all-inclusive philosophy. This philosophy can point out from a higher standpoint the relative merits and limitations of each partial system, its relative truth and error. Our ideal comprehensive philosophy with its broad outlook will find a rightful place for each of the ideologies associated with a particularistic system of philosophy and will explicate its limited scope and validity, that is, relative worth.

Implicit in our method is the faith in grades of reality corresponding to levels of philosophical consciousness, the highest level being identical with that of Self-realization and salvation. Again, we have assumed that philosophy is not airy speculation, rather it is nothing if not intuitively grounded; the so-called principles and categories of philosophy must be directly perceived before being asserted. This means philosophy is not discursive or imaginative wandering within the limited field of our ordinary vision provided by our ordinary faculties; instead it is a call to our higher faculties latent in us, a demand to see for ourselves reality as it is in place of conjecturing about it from a distance with narrow mental capacities. To know Brahman we have to become Brahman, say the Upaniṣads. Philosophy is thus not merely an intellectual discipline, but also, and essentially, a spiritual discipline, *yoga*. No philosophical truth can ever be attained through mere intellectual arguments based on sense-data, there will be but a multiplication of rival theories, polemics, opinions and mere verbal quibbles. Nothing is true unless it is experienced and philosophical truths, just like ordinary factual ones, must be experienced. The only difference is that while the latter kind is given to the senses, the former is given to higher faculties. So that the logical positivists are right in their principle of appealing to experience, only their idea of experience is limited to sense-experience. Now to attain the highest philosophical truth, the Self, one has to transcend his empirical mind and the objectivity of empirical reality and has to realize the spontaneity of the Self that is his real essence which is also the essence of all things. Therefore, to attain an all-comprehensive philosophy which will unite the world the philosophers have to adopt a spiritual discipline of the type of *yoga*. It is a serious error and limitation on the part of Western philosophers to think that such a great thing as an all-inclusive harmonious philosophy, ultimate wisdom uniting mankind, is merely an intellectual feat, as if it is finding a suitable formula to fit a certain series of facts. We cannot get a real solution of our problem so easily, a remedy for our fundamental social ills so cheaply. We have to change ourselves, develop and reform, in order to gain the ultimate truth, and yet, paradoxically, after passing through all these changes we will but discover ourselves, our real Self, the truth of our being and of all things. 'That Thou Art' and 'Knowing that you know everything', say the Upaniṣads.

Physics and Metaphysics : A Vedāntic Approach

17

Substance has proved to be a will o' the wisp. Physics has grown self-aware now and has abandoned its quest after the 'core of things', declaring it to be a non-existent nonsense. This 'core', moreover, serves no useful purpose for physics : the entities such as atoms, electrons, or waves, if regarded as real things, cannot *explain* the perceptible phenomena; they cannot be the adequate *cause* of their so-called 'observable effects.' This is seen from such terms as 'emergence' and 'new substantial relatedness', which some naturalists use to describe their supposed production of a qualitative effect out of a conjunction of some basic elements. Then, there is always the question, what causes the basic stuff itself ? — a question that must accompany a 'first cause'. So that, substance raises more problems than it can solve. The physicists have given up their past allegiance not only to substance but also to the notion of a productive cause implied in the above statements. For this notion involves an unsolved paradox. If the productive cause is inadequate to produce the effect which contains some new character (due to conjunction, or 'substantial relatedness'), it is no true cause ; and if it is adequate to produce the effect, the latter is identical with the cause and no real relation of causality can bind them. The relinquishment of the ideas of substance and productive cause implies a drastic change in the meaning of explanation, and modern physics has recognized this change. Explanation of a particular phenomenon or law now consists in connecting it with some general quantitative law and showing the former to be a particular case of the latter. In short, explanation consists in description ; due regard is now paid to Bacon's caution that science should not attempt to answer 'why' and 'what' of things, but should be content with dealing with the question, 'how things behave ?'

Such is the present attitude of physics, the vanguard of scientific thought. The metaphysician is generally abashed as if he has been found out. The positivists speak of his part in physics during the last three centuries as one of a muddle-headed old fellow misleading physics while always meddling with it. The metaphysician in Galelio, Newton, Laplace, Faraday and others led them to seek a unifying *being* (not logical but the 'thing' itself) behind their formal unification, and, so, set scientific research on an endless track that led researchers from one mechanical model to another, all placed in the order of increasing subtlety, dignity and 'truth'. It was Mach who first asked scientists to stay on empirical grounds and to treat all facts as equivalent. But the physicist could be weaned of his metaphysical bias for substance or the 'first cause' only very recently. He has now completely broken the three hundred years long partnership with the metaphysician, who has grumblingly left the laboratory for his quiet nook in the library.

Our object in this paper is to see whether it is the metaphysician who is to blame in this joint enterprise known as classical science (or scientific rationalism), or it is the physicist. The general suspicion falls on the former. The result of our investigation will be that in one respect none is to blame, while in another both are to blame. None, because they naively played their respective parts with considerable zeal ; both, because they should have known that the object and method of one's research are essentially different from, and even logically incompatible with, those of the other. Generally these two persons lived in a single physical frame. Evidently, we are assuming here a concept of metaphysics as well as one of science (physics in particular), and our investigation of the case, metaphysics *versus* physics, will mainly consist of an exposition of these concepts and of their asserted incompatibility. The judgment will follow simply from these concepts.

The scientific object (fact) has its objectivity *given* ; the *otherness* of facts is a felt something which is itself not a fact, and science believes all facts as knowable. Thus the implicit creed of science is realism, which ensures objectivity of facts, plus a solipsistic idealism, which ensures the knowability of all facts. Science does not worry about its epistemological presuppositions, and, so, of the contradictions in them. The scientific object is not one single thing involving many as its organic parts, that is only what some scientists wish it to be. It is, rather, a multiplicity of facts, loosely connected with many a missing link. A fact is understood with reference to another, which has to be related to similar facts and so on *ad infinitum*. Thus, empirical thought proceeding as it does by proper logical judgments, connects a fact with another and is never complete. Because some facts resemble one another and also repeat with tolerable constancy under similar circumstances, empirical thought has been able to economize mental labour and to arrive at some general laws of connection of facts. The functional relations so arrived at are, however, only rough generalizations or working rules which cannot be valid laws for anticipating future facts.

They depend for their absolute validity on such principles as uniformity of nature and causality, which are not proven but merely assumed by science to organize its data. So that, science, i.e. empirical thought, can have no rest and can establish itself on no firm basis ; its object is the shifty surface of things known as phenomena, and its method consists of observation, classification, experimentation, and careful relating of a fact with another.

Metaphysical thought arises not out of an urge for higher unification of facts, not out of any such scientific mode of research. It arises out of the Self's projection of its inner experiences. The Self in its enjoying attitude is subjective, but while it contemplates its reality, unity, knowledge and spontaneity, it believes in an objective entity that is an infinite singular, self-subsistent and self-evidently unfolding itself through a multiplicity of forms — matter, life, mind, and their multifarious manifestation. This self-subsistent object is neither known as a fact is known through external perception, nor as the self is known through intuition. Rather, it is a believed content, a symbolic representation of the Self's subjective experiences as a subject of knowledge, will and beatitude. (Feelings other than beatitude are external psycho-somatic facts and belong to the empirical self, the Self knows them through introspection as objects, though it temporarily suffers them as if they are its own states). Thus Self-intuition, as that of the mystics, reveals the reality of the Self as a permanent subject, (a spirit that is never known as an object) ; contemplation of the Self with consequent self-projection or symbolization produces the self-subsistent metaphysical object ; ordinary introspection distinguishes the phenomenal self from the Self (noumenal), and ordinary perception reveals the scientific object (fact). Empirical thought is employed in the last two kinds of knowledge (which are knowledge proper), while philosophical thought is required to elaborate the first two kinds of knowledge. (Philosophical thought is no thought proper, nor the two kinds of knowledge just referred to knowledge proper, yet these have their rightful place in man's mental and spiritual culture which, in its endeavours to comprehend reality as a whole, is never satisfied with the meagre and inconclusive yield of 'proper' knowledge from empirical thought). The question of reality of the metaphysical object is a natural one. The Self, when fully realized as a pure spirit and distinguished from the empirical self, appears as reality itself, for to deny its reality involves a self-contradiction. The metaphysical object, therefore, being but the symbolic representation of the Self drawn by the Self in its objective attitude has also a kind of reality which the Self can deny only when it ceases to symbolize itself and contents itself with the subjective (enjoying) attitude. Or else, the Self may assume an absolute attitude in which the object is appropriated by it (the Self) and its (the object's) separate being denied, the subject and the object (the latter is but the subject symbolized) are synthesized on a higher plane of self-realization. For the Absolute, therefore, there is neither enjoying of reality, nor any contemplation of it by way of symbolization. The Absolute is, thus, above reality-unreality, subject-object and all such categories. Nothing positive can be asserted of it as every such concept delimits it and so falsifies it. The Absolute can be spoken of only in negatives as is done in Vedānta (in terms *neti*, *neti*, meaning 'not this, not that !').

However, our concern in this study is with the metaphysical object. We find from this rough sketch of a transcendental psychology that the reality of the metaphysical object is similar to that of an illusory one (e.g. one seen in a hallucination) which the self (here empirical) projects outwards. The object thus projected represents some state of the empirical self, some affection, or tendency. The illusory object is real in a sense, yet unreal in another sense. For the illusion breaks and the illusory object is no longer believed in, but that it was cannot be denied. In the case of the Self (noumenal) the illusory object projected is no image but a symbol which has nothing in common with an image but its objectivity. The illusory object is *māyā*, and this is the metaphysical object. It *is* yet *is not*. For the Self is eternal and it projects itself in its objective attitude ; again, the Self may not project itself and be totally unaware of the metaphysical object. Moreover, the projection outwards and the withdrawal into itself are not temporal activities (for the Self is above times), so that, speaking in ordinary terms, we may say that the metaphysical object (*māyā*) eternally is and never is. Such is the contradictory nature of *māyā*. From an empirical standpoint it is ununderstandable and ineffable. From the standpoint of the Self, realized (i.e. enjoyed) as the pure subject, it is a non-entity, but from the standpoint of the Self, contemplating itself in an objective attitude, it is an entity as real as a symbol is real with respect to a reality symbolized. And lastly, from the standpoint of the Absolute, the metaphysical object is again a non-entity. There is a difference, however, in the two cases of the metaphysical object being a non-entity. When the Self in its subjective attitude is innocent of it, the latter has a potential being, for the Self by its very nature takes up an objective attitude, the subjective attitude implies the objective one by contrast. The two attitudes of the Self are logical alternates which the Self transcends only in its absolute mode of being. Then *māyā* ceases to have even a potential being.

For empirical (i.e. scientific) thought, thus, the metaphysical object is a nonsense, and the positivists have done the right thing in eliminating it from scientific vocabulary. The metaphysician in the classical physicists did not see that the metaphysical object, substance, was never to be arrived at by inference from the manifold of facts. For a true inference will yield but another fact ; an atom, an electron or a wave is either such a fact (waiting to be perceived as the realists believe) or a fiction. The fact is never self-subsistent and, so, cannot be the metaphysical object. And the fictions which empirical thought spins out for economical description of facts. (the methodological concepts, hypothetical models) have not the same kind of reality as is possessed by the symbolic Self-representation on a different plane made by the Self. So that, the metaphysical object cannot be proved by either an inductive or a deductive method, in each of which the ultimate sources of (and also courts of appeal for) knowledge are facts. Philosophical reasoning, if unadulterated with empirical thought, is no reasoning at all, but a systematic exposition of concepts self-evidently intelligible with reference to the spiritual experiences of the Self. The deductive proof in a metaphysical theory is only a make-belief, an exposition of an implicit tautology. The metaphysical concepts of substance and causality are not the same as the postulates of some basic stuff and of some functional relation between facts which science requires in order to systematize its results. The former are really derived from consciousness by Self-objectification, while the latter are formal axioms which are formulated from time to time. The Euclidean axioms are no longer valid for the physical space as inferred from present data, and the postulate of a continuum as the prime stuff is disproved by quantum theory. In fact, there are many possible sets of axioms for covering the same set of data, and the latter too are neither fixed nor can be anticipated. To regard the four-dimensional world-picture of relativity physics as the real world (the metaphysical object), or, again, to regard Schrödinger waves as Substance, is but an instance of confusion of science with metaphysics. On the other hand, to treat matter, life and mind as scientific objects is an instance of confusion of metaphysics with science. The non-discrimination of science from metaphysics, that is, empirical thought from rational or intuitive (that deals with a content that is self-evident and symbolic of the Self) is the root cause of the great mess of both metaphysics and physics which the classical scientists made in the last three centuries. These men were great geniuses and would have made better progress both in metaphysics and physics had they *known* better, that is, had they been more conscious of what they were seeking. Classical physics, with plenty of energy and creative force, and plenty of new-found data too, did not *know* much. Modern physics knows better ; it has learnt to think clearly about what it can hope to know in science and about the scientific method. In other words, it is now able to distinguish the scientific object from the metaphysical one, and the scientific method of research (inductive-deductive) from the metaphysical (intuitive).

But the modern physicists, in their positivistic zeal, deny metaphysics all value and significance. This is but a reaction against the mischief which the metaphysical bias did to the progress of physics. A cooler understanding of the issues involved will, however, lead them to appreciate the part played by metaphysics in human knowledge in general which includes, besides scientific knowledge (proper), such kinds as may be intuitive. For it is dogmatic to maintain that sense-perception is the only valid source of knowledge. Scientific knowledge, moreover, is by its very nature not complete in itself, the scientific object being not self-subsistent, and we require some other kind of knowledge to supplement it. This is philosophical knowledge with its three grades : the philosophy of the spirit, the philosophy of the object (metaphysics) and the philosophy of the Absolute. Evidently, this philosophical knowledge is intuitive and lacks that kind of objectivity or communicability which characterizes scientific knowledge. But it is not to be suspected as idle speculation, for though there is no knowledge (proper) of the Self, or of anything relating to it, yet there is felt a demand in us to realize or intuit the Self. Thus there is a place for spiritual culture (*yoga*) leading to Self-realization spoken of by the mystics. Kant abolished knowledge to make room for faith; the greatest philosophers and mystics have done the same thing. This faith is not mere wishful thinking of the empirical self (that which is ruled by affections that are objects for the Self to contemplate and rule at will), but a direct intuition of the Self demanding Self-consciousness or Self-comprehension. To deny this is to shut a door of knowledge and deny oneself the privilege of a direct communication with multifaced reality. The metaphysical depth of things is not to be confused with scientific facts, yet it has to be accepted as something real (on a different grade of reality) which is needed to have a complete comprehension of things. How the fact and the metaphysical object are related is a question which is born of a confusion of the two grades of reality, which is the same thing as a confusion of the two attitudes of the Self, one receptive outwards (empirical) and another intuitive and symbolizing (transcendental). To attempt to relate the two grades is to ignore the gulf between them ; the idea of reality as one systematic whole where every part is organically linked with every other is but a poetic idea imagined after the image of an organism. So, the belief that the empirical world can be explained from a so-called 'higher' plane of reality is unfounded. Any such philosophical thought which proceeds from an observation of the empirical world through inference or analogy (and not from an intuition of the Self and contemplation of it) produces but imaginative pictures of reality which are not really believed in. They have at best 'a suggestive value for science and an illustrative value for philosophy'.[1]

To conclude, metaphysics is to be avoided in science but allowed in knowledge in general, though no continuity between the two grades of knowledge can be asserted and no grading in terms of 'higher' and 'lower' is tenable.

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[1] See K.C. Bhattacharya : 'Concept of Philosophy' in *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, edited by Profs. Muirhead and Radhakrishnan (Allen & Unwin, 1936). In the present study I have freely used Prof. Bhattacharya's concept of philosophy as offered in that essay though I have given my own approach to the concept and have introduced some important changes in the detail. This concept of philosophy is essentially Vedāntic. Thus Vedānta contains the germ of the solution of the problem of substance, which (problem) is at once important and intriguing in modern scientific philosophy.

Is Metaphysics Possible ?

18

We have to observe the relative standpoints in making a transcendent, and so, illegitimate, use of the category of causality as Kant pointed out. It is like seeking the heater of fire that heats or the illuminator of light that illumines.

Again, to ask for a *logical* ground of the world is meaningless, for the simple reason that the 'world' is not regarded as an element of a logical system or a language with syntactical rules. X can be a logical ground of Y if they are propositions and X is one of the premises of Y in deductive syllogism or if both are terms in a proposition and Y is defined in terms of X such that Y implies X. Logic is verbal and logical analysis works out and exhibits tautologies which are not at once self-evident. Logic, therefore, cannot discover truths.

Thus from the above it follows that metaphysics, which implies transcension of natural science and which procedure, as just shown, leads *either* to vague and subjective experiences and to self-contradiction *or* to anything significantly beyond the obvious data of experience, is no science or knowledge proper. It may have some emotive value but not of any cognitive one.

Now how to face and answer this positivist thesis ? Certainly the need for metaphysics arises out of the question of the ground of the *a priori* factors in natural science, but the ground conceived either as causal or as logical leads to cognitively meaningless, though imaginatively or emotionally significant, results. Is there no other way to conceive the ground such as would lead to meaningful metaphysics ? Positivism or any philosophical theory cannot limit the possibility of meaning of the ground and there cannot be any *a priori* reason why there should be only two ways of conceiving it. For these two ways are as contingent as any number of them. Rather than these two ways of conceiving the ground — the causal and logical, as being exhaustive, we have some *a priori* reason to believe that there may be a *third* way. For, even though these two ways are proved to be intellectually ineffectual, we do entertain the idea of ground of the *a priori* factors of natural science; we are not emancipated from it as we are in the case of ideas found erroneous on analysis. We cannot but seek the ground, cannot but ask the reason why there is the world, sense-experience, space, time, causality, and the rest, and knowledge itself with its subjective and objective poles. And we do see, after all the positivist exposition of the meaninglessness of these questions, that there still lurks some meaning behind them. So we come to suspect that there may be a *third* meaning of the ground of the *a priori* elements in natural science implicit in our mind. We suspect, in other words, the existence of a metaphysical world of which we might have some experience.

The problem is to find out this meaning and thus to construct a meaningful metaphysics. We affirm that this meaning is *phenomenological* in character. What we affirm by this is that there is an experience, which, though non-sensuous and non-conceptual in the ordinary sense (in which we perceive and conceive empirical objects), is yet objective and implicit in the *a priori* factors of natural science, and, so, is the ground of the latter. Just as empirical objects in their interrelations, when contemplated, yield the *a priori* factors or the categories to the contemplative mind, so do these categories in their turn reveal their underlying reality or ground to the in-seeing mind. Such a searching depth-analysis of experience in order to trace its obvious aspects to their original home is generally known as phenomenological research by Husserl and his school and this is not essentially different from the meditative method in Indian philosophy, particularly followed by Yoga and Vedānta.[1]

It is a serious method of philosophical research which makes transparent what appears to be obscure and explicates what is implicit through a series of direct intuitions. It does not hypothesize and speculate as do the scientist and the scientific philosopher who ever remain in doubts and never can break out of the charmed circle of the provisional or the tentative. For, in science and such speculative philosophies no theory can be finally verified to be true, there being always the possibility of its being reversed by a better theory and there being no knowing as to the uniformity of Nature. By virtue of this method, which is scientific, leading to objective results, philosophy becomes an enterprise of discovery instead of invention, construction or system-building, a true cognitive discipline yielding Truth directly such as its Sanskrit name *darśana* (which means perception) suggests.

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[1] Note particularly the levels of reality gradually reached in the Bhṛgu-valli of *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, the Gārgī-Yājñavalkya dialogue in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (III, 6), and the Nārada-Sanatkumara dialogue in Çhāndogya Upaniṣad (VII, I), as also the Prajāpati-Devāsura dialogue therein (VIII, 7). Again, note the levels of reality revealed in Yoga in successive stages of *samādhi* or meditation. Note also Śaṅkara's and other Vedāntists' insistence on Vedic revelation as the authoritative source of knowledge in matters metaphysical. Śaṅkara disregards reasoning (*tarka*) as a source of such knowledge as it has no foundational value. It has value only in understanding and collating revelation or scripture (See his commentary on Brahma-Sūtras, I i.2, II. i 6, II. i, II).

To come to our specific question, viz. the notion of the ground of the presuppositions of natural science or, in other words, of the empirical world, we have affirmed that it is neither causal nor logical but phenomenological in the sense that there is an objective experience underlying the experience of the world as offered by natural science, and that this former experience when explicated will account for the latter. It is not a causal ground or a first cause, but is experienced as a truly transcendent ground, as a creator. It is again not a substance which is a naturalistic conception and as such cannot characterize the transcendent ground of Nature (i.e. our experience of the empirical world). It is immaterial and may be called spirit, mind or soul if each is conceived as unsubstantial. Similarly, it is not in space-time, has no quantity and quality in the empirical sense. So, it may be said to be here, there and everywhere, yet nowhere in particular ; now, then and everywhen, yet nowhen in particular, infinitely big, yet infinitely small, having all qualities, yet discarding all of them.[2] The transcendent ground as experienced in a trans-empirical meditation will have to be provisionally expressed in such paradoxes. For, it, on the one hand, transcends all empirical nature, being the ground of it (the ground cannot contain the characters of the grounded) and, on the other, cannot totally negate the empirical nature (for the ground comprehends all the characters of the grounded in a sense). The creator spirit of the world, as directly revealed by phenomenological research, cannot be characterized in terms of the character created by it, yet it cannot be said to be as excluded from them as fire from water, for creations are somehow in the creator. The true realization is expressed by some as the ground to be both *in and above* empirical characters, both transcendent and immanent (Note also the statement about Brahman, the *Puruṣa Sūkta* of the *Ṛgveda,* 'pertaining the universe, it exceeded it by ten fingers'). This conception of the ground may be elucidated by an analogy. The empirical soul creates the dream objects — including the dreamer himself ; all the characters of the dream do not characterize the empirical self which *cannot* nonetheless be said to be absolutely above them, for they are immanently in it, created and operated by it.

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[2] Compare such paradoxical statements regarding Brahman in Īśā Upaniṣad, 5-6.

(Hence it is said in the Upaniṣad that everything is Brahman, yet It is known by negating everything in the world — through *neti, neti*).

Now, we do not propose to delineate a phenomenological metaphysics here.[3] We have given above just a hint of such a discipline to exhibit the possibility of metaphysics as a science. The conceptions of this metaphysics are expressible in such negative terms as infinity, non-spatiality non-temporality and non-substantiality, and such paradoxes as everywhere and nowhere, everywhen and nowhen, big yet small, known yet unknown (see *Kena Upaniṣad*, 9-11). This is because our language is a product of empirical experience, that is, of science and commonsense, which serves our ordinary work-a-day life. If we have, in large measure and collectively, the transcendental knowledge through meditative or phenomenological research, then we can have also appropriate terms for the metaphysical concepts just as higher mathematics, and other sciences have their own. The only positive terms we seem to use in our metaphysics are creation and freedom, but they too are open to misunderstanding, being sometimes understood in their empirical sense of causation and licence. So, it would be advisable for clarity at expression and communication in metaphysics proper to have a terminology of its own. But that requires, as noted above, a good measure of common experience in this province. Thought and conceptual articulation presuppose this ground and it is only on the basis of this that they can carry out their vision which is organization of experience into an objective and communicable form and thus emancipation of the mind from mute feelings and sentiments to expressive knowledge.

Thus, though the scientific attitude, in its initial and narrow, dogmatic form, is sceptical of any metaphysical knowledge, it, when developed and enlightened, shows the way to true metaphysics, which is not a speculative movement 'about and about' but a real research somewhat like science itself in another plane of experience. The positivistic criticism of 'so-called' metaphysics is largely correct and it is healthy for true philosophy which must seek some clear objective form in order to be a cognitive discipline and which must not rest satisfied with either the speculative ventures of the literary artist or the visions and the sentiments of the poet, and the prophet. It is to use repeating that thought cannot apprehend and express the trans-empirical truths ; for, thought can reflect any experience as is proved by its success in the higher sciences like biology, psychology, sociology, also ethics and aesthetics studied as science, where higher and more complex concepts are formed to grasp the richer and subtler experiences. What we need for metaphysics is real digging and drilling to bring out the requisite experiences underlying the surface ones on natural sciences. Given the experiences, thought will not be idle or wanting in its business of organizing the datal mass into a science through its usual process of conception, judgment and reasoning. The mind wants to *know* what is experiences, to mediate what it apprehends as immediate, to hold apart and grasp reflectively and possess what it appears to *be*, and, lastly, to communicate to and share with others what is first got as one's own. In other words, mind seeks to and is competent to transform its own discovery into a social reality, to objectify the subjective realizations into objective knowledge. This it does through thought. Before one has fully exhausted the capacities of one's mind to discover through a meditative search the basal experiences beneath the ordinary ones, and to translate these into thought, it is idle to speak of the impossibility of metaphysics as a science. This is a caution to the positivists who deny metaphysics on the ground that we have no experiences other than sense-experience, and an appeal to others who deny it on the ground that the supersensible experiences are incommunicable.

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[3] This is attempted elsewhere. See (*Prabuddh Bharata*, July-August, 1952,) the article 'Vedānta Phenomenology.'

To conclude this discussion on the possibility of metaphysics as a science let us observe the relative standpoints of science and Vedānta. (Our phenomenological method is really Vedāntic with its insistence on having transcendental experiences instead of relying on speculations, argumentation, and mere analogies from empirical experience). Science, i.e. natural philosophy, may deny at first the possibility of a metaphysics or superscience. Its ground for this denial is not altogether false and destructive of cultivation of true metaphysics. For, what it demands is that metaphysics, to be authentic knowledge, must have objective metaphysical experiences just as science has empirical experiences amenable to conceptualization and so communication. Science thus exerts a healthy influence on true metaphysics and curbs useless speculation and dry argumentation. Vedānta admits this criticism. Then science itself become keenly aware of its presuppositions which can be known only through a metaphysical search on a higher level of being. So, it encourages this search. And by the success it has achieved in the various fields, where it has had to search for original experiences and to bring them to concepts of a new kind (such as in biology, psychology, ethics), science teaches this lesson that thought can rise to the occasions presented to it instead of remaining hide-bound and cramped. Thought can think and articulate not only the simple mechanical concepts but the complex ones of life, mind, goodness and beauty with perfect clarity and objectivity. So there is no bar to our metaphysical search in a scientific manner. Vedānta lays stress on realization just as science does on observation and verification more than on mere abstract theorization. Vedānta says that the reality is beyond thought and speech, but then it means ordinary empirical thought and speech. It *does* think and speak of this reality and does speak of Brahman—knowledge and teaching. It rightly lays stress on the experimental data just as science does on experiment and observation. So, there is no essential diversity between the methods of the two. They have different dative planes. And then Vedānta metaphysics completes science which *reaches* its consummation in the former.

From Aesthetics to Vedānta

The chief problem in aesthetics is how to explain the peculiar delight we get from aesthetic sympathy. In other words, we have to explain the fact that while in real life certain symbols (sounds, colours, objects, bodily movements, forms etc.) arouse certain emotions, in aesthetic appreciation they evoke the same feelings, but all touched with a characteristic joy. Thus the emotions of fear and sorrow aroused in real life are undesirable, yet they are intensely enjoyed when aroused in art. Various explanations have been given from time to time by different thinkers, but none is satisfactory. Most of them suffer from this defect, namely, that they explain not the characteristic aesthetic delight, but a kind of satisfaction which we ordinarily feel and can very well distinguish from the former. They fail to distinguish art from life, the aesthetic attitude from the realistic one.

Thus the explanations given by Aristotle in terms of 'catharsis' confuses a feeling of relief from tragic passions with the aesthetic thrill we enjoy while passions are being experienced in a tragedy. Besides, the relief comes *after* the suffering. The explanation given by Hegel and others in terms of 'objectification of passions' or 'disinterested contemplation' of them also confuses the two kinds of satisfaction, the aesthetic and the contemplative. The latter kind results when an emotion is known and transcended (as in *yoga*), while the former results from a vigorous participation in the emotions with the intellect lulled to half-sleep by the intensity of the feelings themselves and by such artistic means as music and stage craft (as in drama), rhythm and a poetic diction (as in poetry). The art-world is a shadow world conjured up by man's imagination, and that this is so is deliberately impressed upon the spectators or readers by various means. This is because the artist wants that the intellect (i.e. the critical faculty) of the spectators or readers may not be so alert as to obstruct their ready artistic sympathy and so spoil their enjoyment of the emotions depicted in art. So that aesthetic delight is not the intellectual satisfaction one gets from knowing and transcending an emotion. A third type of explanation (given by F.L.Lucas for instance) confuses aesthetic delight with the pleasure we get from experiencing an emotion. It rightly points out that we do not go to see a tragedy for wisdom; beauty is not useful and art is no pill. But it does not appreciate the clear distinction between an emotion as enjoyed in art, where it is always coloured and transfigured by a peculiar delight, and one experienced in real life, where this peculiar delight is absent. A mother's sorrow for her lost child is not wanted in real life for our sympathetic enjoyment of it, but it is so wanted in art. Those, like Hegel, or I.A. Richards, who hold that tragic emotions are liked in art because they are harmonized, ignore the fact that we not only enjoy the rich harmony of different emotions in art but also the single emotions, such as the disgust of Hamlet for his mother as depicted in a particular speech, or the sadness of Ophelia while she sings a particular song.

Rousseau and others have pointed out that in tragedy the delight is but sadistic and malicious in nature. This is clearly a misinterpretation of the aesthetic delight; a normal person who hates to see others in sorrow finds pleasure in a tragedy. The sadistic pleasure has a different taste altogether from that of aesthetic delight.

Lastly, the theory of sublimation of emotions effected in art does not meet our demand. For in sublimation an emotion is diverted from its immediate objective to some higher one. No such process, either conscious or unconscious, takes place in aesthetic sympathy, where we will presently see that an emotion is experienced for its own sake, that is, it becomes its own objective, and end in itself. Thus we have to admit that aesthetic delight is not an ordinary type of delight: it is a class apart.

For an explanation of this delight we have to search for not causes of other kinds of delight which are all realistic, be they affective, intellectual, or yogic, but the cause of this unique kind. The aesthetic should be clearly distinguished from the realistic one. The Indian aestheticians, particularly Abhinavagupta, have directed their thought in this line. They have pointed out that the emotions and the symbols arousing them in art are not taken to be real and particular ones, because they are produced not by nature but by art. They are unreal and generalized ones, not continuous with reality as we know it. The emotion is felt and yet not felt to be any particular one, having its rightful place in our life-history. It affects our life only too-remotely, if at all, as indirectly as our dreams and fantasies. Thus the moonlit night, the tears from the heroine's eyes and her sad words but represent universals and depict some universal sorrow. This sorrow is neither the heroine's, nor the actress's, nor the spectator's, nor of anybody real and related to him by friendship or enmity. Therefore, the sorrow depicted is some universal ideal content which is experienced for its own sake and which does not awaken any individualistic and realistic responses. This pure experience of a de-individualized emotion for its own sake is possible only in the aesthetic attitude; and in art this attitude is readily developed and maintained by the consciousness that the art-world is our own making : it resembles the real world, yet has a different kind of being. It is *mimesis,* imitating, or *poesis,* making, but both in a plane of reality different from that of our ordinary life. Aesthetic experience is thus extraordinary, and so is aesthetic delight which accompanies and characterizes it.

But we have to go beyond this in search of our explanation of aesthetic delight. We have so far, following the Indian aestheticians, distinguished aesthetic delight from other kinds. We have found that this delight comes from experiencing an emotion which is but an ideal content dissociated from its particulars (persons or objects) and enjoyed for its own sake. But we have now to ask, How is this made possible?

This leads us to some metapsychological principles. These may be regarded as hypotheses from an empirical standpoint, as being required to explain aesthetic facts. But they may be intuited by us and so accepted as true principles from a rationalistic standpoint. The Self is the field or substratum on which the play of emotions occurs. Now the Self is naturally free and playful. A wave over its surface is its own creation, an expression of its passing moods. The different kinds of waves are the different emotions, like anger, fear, pity, love, sorrow, and the rest. When the Self freely assumes these moods, It experiences a delight, for It simply beguiles Itself with these passions. To the Self, thus, these emotions are all *rasas*, delightful experiences, each with a different taste.

The Self relishes all of these equally well. The different emotions are created by the Self out of its own sweet will and love of delight. They do not bind It in any way, and It transcends them.

Now, this Self is the universal consciousness, Brahman. The empirical self or ego in us is a free creation of Brahman, who by His own magical power screens and distorts his real nature and becomes many with diverse interests and ends. The external world is a shadowing forth of His different moods and so is full of symbols that express these moods. The ultimate meanings of the objective world are to be found in their emotional contents, the *rasas* they concretize and represent. Just as in a dream the ego bodies forth different images which symbolize its desires, so in what we call reality the Self projects images to gratify playful moods through expressing them. The objectivity of the external world is illusory, a *māyā*; everything falls within the universal consciousness that plays with itself. But the ego is relatively blind, it is the Self forgetful of Itself and taking the external presentations to be real. So the ego, i.e. the empirical self, takes the natural symbols presented to it in an individualistic and realistic attitude, that is, it suffers the emotions as they affect its individual limited being. The ego, when it sees a good man suffering, suffers pity and goes to help him. It does not feel any joy, for the emotion of pity is real to it. Again it does not feel any delight while fearing for its life in the presence of a tiger in a forest. But when it witnesses these sights in art, it feels them to be in a different plane of reality and enjoys the emotions which are even then produced in the manner of the reflexes. Now this is an aesthetic attitude which is easily produced in art, because art-objects are obviously illusory. The question is, why the ego finds delight in thus enjoying emotions for their own sakes and what kind of enjoyment is this? This is the central question we are seeking to answer. Our answer now is that the ego, in its aesthetic attitude, behaves in the manner of the Self (Brahman or universal consciousness), whose portion it is after all. The ego, in its aesthetic attitude, feels a delight very similar to that which the Self, Brahman, feels while It bodies forth the world of *māyā*. The ego then feels itself as if it is at one with Brahman freely indulging in emotions, enjoying them as *rasas* through an array of symbols that have but illusory objectivity. The Indian aestheticians have declared that the aesthetic delight is the very twin of the taste of Brahman (*Brahmāsvā-dasahodara*). The ego, through its aesthetic experiences in art, comes to conceive of an analogous and possible experience of regarding (like Brahman) the world as *māyā*. The world itself can be viewed in an aesthetic attitude when it appears like the art-world, a shadow show created for our pleasure when each object stands for some *rasa* (delight) tinged with some emotion. The aesthetic attitude towards the world (and our life) which we can assume at times shows but the possibility of a vision of this waking reality as *māyā*. This possibility is realized through self-culture (*yoga sādhanā*), and then, as the Upaniṣads and Yoga philosophy hold, we have oneness with Brahman. So that, our aesthetic experience, when it is subjected to philosophical queries, leads to the conception of our real Self, Brahman and, so, to thoughts of self-realization or *mokṣa*.

A-metapsychology (or metaphysics of the soul) of the type sketched above is needed to explain the aesthetic attitude and the aesthetic delight.

Just as the sciences (including psychology) and ethics are not self-contained studies, but require metaphysical assumptions for answering their ultimate questions, aesthetics, too, is to be supplemented by metaphysics. In this paper we have but tried to sketch a metaphysical theory (which, in its fundamentals, is no other than the Vedāntic theory) in the light of which the main problem in aesthetics, viz. that of aesthetic delight, may be intelligible.

Aesthetics — A Vedāntic View

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The aesthetic attitude is characterized by what is technically known as psychical distance[1], that is, a peculiar disinterestedness on the part of the subject towards the aesthetic object. Thus beauty is disinterested contemplation of an object for its own sake. This separation of the beautiful from the useful has been done by many an aesthetician,—Kant, Hegel and Croce in the West, and Ānandavardhana, Abhinavagupta and Mammaṭa in the East, amongst them. The useful is to be understood in its most comprehensive sense in which it includes the pleasing, the understandable and the good. All these are related to the practical self of man seeking satisfaction of some need in things outside him. Thus the pleasing, often called sensuous or superficial beauty, satisfies the senses. The understandable satisfies the intellect which wants to know a thing through studying all its causal connections with other things. This knowledge is never complete and leads the mind from one thing to another *ad infinitum,* and moreover, it is not quite free from practical interest—a thing is known with a view to use it. The good satisfies the practical mind seeking security and ease through personal and social rules and conventions[2]. The useful, in its specific or thin sense, is what satisfies the more immediate and obvious vital needs of man. The beautiful is distinct from all these for grades of the useful; it is apart from the needs and desires of our ordinary life. The aesthetic attitude can develop when our practical interest in the environment is suspended. We then watch with the unconcern of a mere spectator something which ordinarily arouses great concern, for instance, a stormy sea, a house in flames, or a wicked affair. In this disinterested mood our practical self loses itself in some more universal and neutral Self and this is what Keats hints when he speaks of negative capability of poets and of poetic character being without self or identity. A poet identifies himself with all things and delights in both foul and fair, high and low, equally well[3]. It is in an aesthetic mood that the poet appreciates a street-fight as a fine display of spirits[4].

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[1] A term coined by Edward Bullough (*British Journal of Psychology,* V. 89)

[2] This idea of goodness and ethics is empirical; so is the idea of intellectual knowledge. Goodness and knowledge in their transcendental sense are not meant.

This psychical distance marking our aesthetic attitude has been well recognized by both Western and Eastern thinkers, but its philosophical implications have not been specifically worked out. The Indian aestheticians have let fall some significant hints such as the supernormal and divine nature of the aesthetic experience and the delight associated with it, while some Western idealists like Hegel, Fichte, Schopenhauer and Croce, have regarded beauty as an expression of the Absolute Spirit. A comprehensive philosophical theory of the aesthetic attitude, utilizing these cues, seems to be an intellectual need, for the satisfaction of which a study of the philosophical basis of psychical distance, from the Vedāntic standpoint, is imperative and important.

The object of aesthetic contemplation is detached from its practical interests which include the sensuous, moral and intellectual ones. The practical self, the self that seeks to use the object for satisfying some organic need, is thus set aside or suppressed. A drawing-room chair that is valued for its utility in the household, for its appealing structure and finish (aesthetic surface), for the scientific knowledge about it, and for the moral value attached to it by virtue of its being offered to visitors,— fulfils but some organic need. But when regarded as a thing of beauty, either in nature or more easily in art, all these vital functions of it are obliterated and it shines in a peculiar supermundane light, affording an extraordinary joy. An oil-painting of a man famed for his virtue appeals to his relatives and friends, who recognize in it a familiar figure, in a manner different from that in which it does to a moralist, and it appeals differently to a dealer in paintings or to a child who may be pleased by the display of rich colours in it. But all these appeals have one thing in common : they serve some organic need of the human species. To an artist the painting will reveal something that is unconnected with him as an organic being having vital needs. The self in the aesthetic attitude is thus different from that in an ordinary attitude. Philosophical speculations start from this point and the main questions to be answered by any responsible speculative venture are those regarding the nature of this aesthetic self and its experience. In other words, the subject in an aesthetic experience and the experience itself has to be made intelligible once they are distinguished from their analogues in ordinary experience.

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[3] See Keats's Letters to Baily, 22 Nov. 1817 and to Woodhouse, 27 Oct. 1818.

[4] See Keats's Letter to George and Georgiana Keats, 19.March 1819.

For this we have first to enquire into the nature of aesthetic experience. It is marked by psychical distance, a peculiar detachment from ordinary interests that are essentially practical. The other mark is a dominant sentiment (*sthāyibhāva*), served and nourished by some subordinate feelings (*vyabhicāribhāva*)— all suffused by a delight of an extraordinary flavour (*rasa*). For instance, a love poem (or a painting or a sculpture on the same theme) moves us with its sentiment of love which is aroused and sustained by many auxiliary feelings such as longing, jealousy, pain, anger, stupefaction and joy. But, over and above these, there is a peculiar delight that can hardly be confused with the joy that may be evoked as an accessory to the dominant sentiment or even as a dominant sentiment itself. The aesthetic delight is different in taste from the ordinary one. The delight that moves the poet to express it in a poem is not the sole delight which the poem yields to the reader or the poet himself. There is an added delight of a different and finer kind which is the delight of expression. Any sentiment, whether of joy or of sorrow, is shot through and through with this aesthetic delight when it is given expression in art. In the case of natural beauty, when the sentiments associated with the beautiful object are contemplated and expressed, the natural object of beauty appears as an artistic expression of the sentiments, as a piece of art made by some cosmic artist, —God or Nature-Spirit.

Thus we have two paradoxes with regard to aesthetic attitude. First, there is psychical distance or a certain detachment; yet, there is some amount of attachment to human sentiments as projected on the aesthetic object (which seems to arouse and satisfy these sentiments) through aesthetic sympathy (technically known as empathy). Secondly, the joy afforded by the beautiful is not ordinary joy, as yielded by an object satisfying some organic need—practical, sensuous, intellectual, or moral. We have to resolve these paradoxes. This is to be done by realizing that the sentiments associated with the beautiful in art and Nature are not specific, affecting one personally, but they are generalized sentiments which one feels in an impersonal manner. The feelings accompanying an aesthetic experience are dislodged from their particular objects and individual minds and float as universal contents in the mental continuum of collective man. The feelings neither belong to the beautiful object, which is said to evoke them and on which they are projected, nor to the person who is said to feel them. No real interest is taken in the aesthetic object, which suffers an illusory or fictitious being, serving only as a general scheme or body, to shelter and suggest the feelings, and no real emotional attitude is evoked in the sense that the subject is neither anxious to continue it (if it is an agreeable one) nor to stop it (if it is a painful one). The subject contemplates any emotion, either tragic or pleasurable, with equal interest, for it does not touch him really and personally. In a realistic attitude, one holds the object as a part of his environment and relates it to other objects (to know it) and to himself (to use it). In an aesthetic attitude, because the object is no longer held as real, it is not related to anything but contemplated for its own sake as a self-complete and self-dependent entity. As the object is thus disengaged from reality, the feeling associated with it loses any real source for the subject who feels it in a general way. The feelings are universal essences that are projected on and read into the aesthetic object. They are felt not blindly and passively, as is done in a realistic attitude, but consciously and actively. This active and enlightened way of feeling a generalized emotion projected on an appropriate image yields a superior kind of delight, the characteristic aesthetic delight (*rasa*). An emotion, either agreeable or disagreeable in itself, is thus enjoyed in a transcendent manner, and this enjoyment, which can defeat tragic emotions and feast on them, must be held to be higher in grade than the ordinary emotions. Thus it is that the two paradoxes mentioned above can be solved. We can understand how in aesthetic attitude there are both detachment and attachment and how the aesthetic delight is distinct and superior to ordinary one.

In the above manner can we comprehend the complex psychical process involved in aesthetic attitude.[5] We have found from the above study that an object when regarded in an aesthetic attitude (i.e. as a thing of beauty) loses its hard reality, and so its necessity or imperativeness, and slips into a shadow world. It then ceases to press upon our consciousness with an iron hand and to evoke realistic attitudes—practical, sensuous, intellectual, or moral. Again, the emotions associated with the object as real cease to be real and specific when viewed in the aesthetic attitude and the contemplation of these generalized floating emotions yields a delight qualitatively superior to ordinary delight. We have now to ask the most philosophical question, viz. how is it that the mind or the self is capable of adopting an aestheitc attitude in which an object and its associated feelings cease to be real and pragmatically effective for it (the mind or the self) and how is it that this sublation of reality is attended by a characteristic delight? To answer this all-important question, we have to take recourse to some kind of metapsychology. For, the question itself is metapsychological; it asks the reason behind a fact that has no further fact as its cause, unless, of course, the metapsychological cause itself is intuited as a fact in some supernormal manner. So long as this transcendental cause is not realized as a fact, our speaking of it will be metaphorical in terms which will not strictly mean but suggest some entities. The latter have to be treated as hypothetical and imagined on the analogy of their analogues in empirical experience.

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[5] See author's article, 'Psychical Distance in Indian Aesthetics' in the *American Journal of Aesthetics*, Dec. 1948.

Now, the metapsychological scheme that we postulate here, to answer our question in aesthetics, is that offered by Vedānta. The ego or the practical self is to be conceived as a lower and deluded state of Brahman, the universal Spirit. It has fallen into a kind of phantasy or dream in which it finds itself as individuals having particular interests and points of view. The same self-induced 'degradation' has created an objective world of change and multiplicity, confronting the self. The world and individuality are creations of the conjuring power (*māyāśakti*) of the Absolute, Self, or Brahman. This conjuring power consists in projection or objectification of inner sentiments as outer objects suggesting them and in adopting individual points of view. Space-Time, which according to new physics is the matrix of the physical world, is one result of this projecting power, for it is necessary for differentiation; the individual living beings, spirits in physically separated bodies, are the second result. All these exist as dream objects in the universal Spirit. Brahman remains as such. Only a part of Brahman descends into the differentiated state. 'Pervading the universe, He yet transcends it by a space of ten fingers', says a verse in the *Puruṣasūkta* of the Ṛgveda, and 'only a quarter of Him forms all the living beings', says another. This only means that Brahman is immanent in and yet transcends the individual souls formed by its conjuring power. We can understand this through our analogous experience in dreams and illusions. In the former, the inner (sub-conscious and repressed) desires seek release and fulfilment through projected objects which arouse and satisfy these desires in waking experience. In an illusion, we project an emotion upon a meagre outline of a presentation that is associated with the emotion and create the complete presentation. Thus we see silver where only a silvery surface, such as that of nacre, is presented; we see a snake where only a snake-like appearance, provided by a rope, is given. Projection is found in the empirical order of being. Self-differentiation, by way of identification of the self with diverse states and beings, which is the basis of aesthetic sympathy, is also given in empirical experience. Again, the transcendence-immanence of Brahman, with regard to its creations, has its analogue in empirical order, viz. in dreams and illusions, where the ego somehow knows and subtly and vicariously enjoys the emotions suffered by its deluded part in these lapses. But these are not mere analogies; the universal Spirit exercises its projecting power both in its universal grade and the individual one. The images projected in the individual capacity in dreams and illusions are those which are associated in waking experience with the released emotions. This release, objectification, or expression of emotions, pent up in waking experience, works out through symbolization, which has some individual and universal elements derived from experience. But the images projected by the universal Spirit, in its original unmodified capacity, cannot have any individual elements and they cannot be said to be derived from any previous experience without falling into an infinite regress. Hence these images must be regarded as creations of the emotions associated with them. Why a certain image universally arouses and fulfils a certain emotion (e.g. a certain facial expression excites universally laughter and another fear even in children that have not learned these associations from experience) is to be answered ultimately by the postulate of an original and divine rule of symbolization. A particular image is created by a particular emotion that seeks and finds a concrete embodiment and a final expression in it.

The universal Spirit, residing in the individual spirits (egos or selves), enjoys through them their feelings. The feelings affect the egos who suffer them passively and blindly, but they are actively relished by the higher Spirit that sees through them and knows them as its own creations. The higher Spirit has two grades of being at once; one, the individual, blind and passive; the other, the universal, active and enlightened. As an individual it suffers, but as a universal it enjoys. The secret of the enjoyment of the emotions and the emotive images is that the universal Spirit, through our waking experience (and the ego in dreams), knows them to be but its creations. They stand as living symbols and witness of the conjuring power of the Spirit, the power to cast and withdraw the net of emotions and images, to shadow forth and sublate the multitudinous phenomena.

The universal Spirit, engaged in this sport (*līlā*) of creation and enjoyment, this Brahman as conjurer, is called Īśvara, the *Māyādhīśa* (wielder of *māyā*), who drinks through us sublime delight.[6] 'On the vast canvas of the Self, the Self itself paints the picture of various worlds and the Supreme Self itself derives extreme bliss from seeing that picture', says Śaṅkarācārya (*Svātmanirūpaṇa*, verse 95). Īśvara's power of and delight in creation and sublation (which, we shall presently see, will explain the empirical self's similar power and delight in the aesthetic attitude) has its source in Brahman, the One that apparently adopts the Īśvara grade of Spirit only casually and momentarily (and not causally and permanently. Brahman's moment may easily be an aeon for us, time being relative to the state of consciousness). Brahman is essentially undifferentiated, and it, after a moment's caprice for some 'other' relapses into its primordial mood, with relief. It cannot stand for long the 'strain' of the 'other' which it at first creates, for fun. But even this love of fun cannot be said to be a necessary qualification of Brahman, which may be conceived without any real relation to its occasional lapses (*māyā*), just as a dreamer or a poet may be viewed apart from his dreams or poetry. Brahman, in relation to *māyā*, as a creator and enjoyer of the world, is Īśvara, who is a 'lapsed and momentary' grade of Brahman, the Absolute Spirit. However, the two moments or poles of attitudes towards the conjured up world present in Brahman, while at play, are love of diversion and love of its sole Self. Īśvara, therefore, enjoys the world and the attached emotions in a twofold manner: He delights in their appearance and also in the consciousness of their illusoriness. He treats the world as a passing show with amusement, the enjoyment being derived partly from the positive presentation of something before Him and partly from the feeling of its being self-created and retractable—mere figments to 'beguile' Himself for a while. The world and the emotions, therefore, do not affect Him in the manner they do the individual self. The cause of His delight in the world is thus seen to be its essential unreality with regard to Brahman, the ultimate Reality. Only the Real is the *true* delight, and the consciousness of unreality of some experience other than that of Real is akin to this delight. For, consciousness of unreality of the unreal brings awareness of the Real which is approached through the repeated recognition of what it is not. It is indicated in the Upaniṣads by negatives (*neti, neti,* not this, not this).

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[6] He is called the very essence of *rasa*, in *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*.

Now, in the light of the above metapsychology, we may answer the aesthetic question posed before, viz. how do we possess the power of sublating reality of objects in an aesthetic attitude and how does it afford a characteristic delight? Our answer is that the aesthetic delight is of the nature of the sublime delight of Īśvara (described above) and draws its being from the latter. The practical self is shed away in the aesthetic attitude and the essential universal Spirit in us, roused from its deluded state, adopts an Īśvara-like grade in which the emotions are seen as self-created, having no specific or actual efficacy. They float as universal essences, as noted earlier, and are felt by the universal Self in us in an impersonal way. The aesthetic object is no real and particular object but a generalized emotion and the self experiencing them is the universal Self as Īśvara, immanent in the empirical one. Therefore, the aesthetic attitude is accompanied by a delight of an extraordinary kind (*lokottara*). The delight is similar in quality, though much *lower* in degree, to the sublime delight of Īśvara, contemplating the world as *māyā*. (The quantitative inferiority is due obviously to the far less range and vividness of projection of emotions possessed by the aesthetic subject; aesthetic intuition is a fragmentary image of the vision that is God's). Aesthetic experience may thus be regarded as akin to the relish or delightful realization of God (*Brahmāsvādasaçiva*). Delightful realization of God implies partaking of the being and experience possessed by Him. The aesthetic experience, i.e. beauty, reveals to the self the creative and retractive activity (*līlā* or *māyāśakti*) of Īśvara who is immanent in it (though He transcends it too), and gives it a foretaste of the divine delight of the Īśvara wielding *māyā* with perfect freedom and detachment.

This interpretation of aesthetic experience, while separating it from morality, vindicates it, refuting the stand of its opposers. Of course, the aestheitc experience we are speaking of, may it not be forgotten, is not sensuous or merely formal but it is expressive of human sentiments. This experience, we have seen, is akin to that of the realization of God, and so it cannot lead us astray. It helps, as do practice of goodness, truth and piety, to make man progressively conscious of the illusoriness of the empirical world and the ego-life and of the reality of the higher and non-attached Spirit that is within him for realization. This is the highest good, the *summum bonum* of life. Aesthetic experience or enjoyment of beauty (which is expressive and not sensuous), either in art or in Nature, is good for mankind. In an ultimate sense, therefore, beauty, truth and goodness are one.

A few words of explanation regarding the distinctive philosophical assumptions made in the present study may be helpful to the reader. Grades of reality, corresponding to grades of consciousness, are postulated and the one in which consciousness is absolutely at rest with itself, pure and undifferentiated, is held to be the highest grade. Lower in order of reality are those grades where apparent differentiation occurs and the original Consciousness apparently seeks and projects objects for contemplation, thereby appearing progressively to suffer 'self-delusion', though in essence and actuality it ever transcends these degraded states. These lower grades are those corresponding to Īśvara–contemplating and wielding the world as *māyā*, empirical selves (egos)—experiencing the world as real, and the deluded selves— suffering dreams and illusions. Since all these states are self-induced modes of Brahman which is present even in the lowest one, the subject at any one of these can ascend to the higher one by realizing its original unconditioned state.[7] Thus, liberation of the ego from the empirical world is possible. The individual self, in the aesthtic attitude, rises temporally and in a very small degree to its next higher state, Īśvarahood. The objects, in this state, lose their empirical reality and appear in their universal emotive aspects which induce, instead of any realistic attitude, serene contemplation and delight. The aesthetic subject transcends for a time his empirical self and participates in a more elevated state. This experience of self-transcendence and illusory objectivity is attended by a characteristic delight, different from that resulting from a passion or need satisfied in practical life. This experience is valuable for spiritual progress which consists in progressive knowledge of and freedom from the veils of *māyā*.

The principle or method involved in our metapsychological explanation of aesthetic experience is that it is attributed to a similar experience on a higher grade of consciousness, the lower one being a fragmentary image and derivative of the higher one. The ultimate reason for this higher grade of experience (of Īśvara) of illusory objectivity is indicated with reference to the highest grade where there is no experience of objectivity, Brahman being above all subject-object duality. This gradation of consciousness and the power of the subject to pass from one grade to another is supported by, extrapolated from, and understood on the analogy of the same two things found in the empirical order where the consciousness suffers dreams and illusions, transcends and enjoys them subtly, and then wakes from them. This consciousness is felt to be the only self-dependent entity and its nature can explain the nature of the world of experience. To explain this diversity of the latter, some principle of unity is necessary and this principle must be a conscious self-developing and differentiating entity, for, any abstract law or formula, as sought by a naturalistic philosophy, will demand some vital- conscious agent to conceive and work it. The world and its evolution can ultimately be understood only in terms of consciousness, as a psychological process, for, the only thing that must be accepted as ultimate and unquestionable is consciousness that questions. Any objective entity known by consciousness as the 'other', as matter or abstract laws, will be further questioned. Consciousness and its higher grades are not objects of knowledge as such, they are to be realized as embedded in the Self and they are to be fully lived. Knowledge of Brahman is to be Brahman; he who knows it as the 'other' deludes himself, says the Upaniṣads. Brahman, as the undifferentiated being, is conceived (in our rational philosophy) by carrying to the logical extreme our principle of analogy and gradation. Since consciousness is seen, in its lower grades, as capable of self-delusion and differentiation as well as of self-realization and self-collection, we have to conceive a state of pure and collected being of consciousness, where it transcends all objectivity, and not as conscious of itself like a subject set against some object. It is purely impersonal in this extreme state, while its first mode of self differentiation, Īśvarahood, is personal. Īśvara is referred to as 'He' while Brahman as 'It'. This absolute state of consciousness is co-essential with absolute awareness, freedom and delight. Progressive self-limitation of these characters arise with increasing differentiation (and veiling and distorting) of the Pure Consciousness. The concept of self-conditioning of an unconditioned Spirit, for which conditioning is apparent and a passing mood, adopted in sport and cancelled with relief, serves to explain, in lower grades of the Spirit, the fact of illusory objectivity, self-transcendence and a characteristic delight.

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[7] The different states of Brahman are not physical parts of transformations of it. Our language being fashioned for practical purposes, dealing with the material world, cannot adequately express, without recourse to paradoxes and contradictions, this state of affairs in which a portion of the Spirit in any of its modes is essentially and potentially the whole of the Spirit. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* says, '*That* is Whole, *this* (too) is Whole; from the Whole proceeds the Whole; (and when) from the Whole the Whole is taken, the Whole alone remains'. The individual self becomes Brahman by realizing Brahmán within, as the Upaniṣads declare. As the dreaming self gets conscious, in the dream, of the unreality of the dream state and then wakes from it, even so the ego becomes aware of the unreality of the empirical world and then rises to higher states. The subtle workings of the higher grade of consciousness in the lower one in order to rouse and raise the subject in the latter is the essence of divine grace.

Aesthetical Metaphysics

21

We have metaphysical aesthetics as well as aesthetical metaphysics which shows that we sometimes allow our idea of reality, reached intellectually, to dictate our interpretation of beauty, and, then, sometimes allow our experience of beauty to rule our understanding of reality. The traditional aesthetics of the West illustrates the former situation while a good section of Indian metaphysics does the latter one. We shall first substantiate this statement in this paper and then seek to put in some order aesthetical metaphysics, the basic ideas of which are found in the philosophical literature of India.

Beauty as an aspect of intellectual truth, an intelligible form shining through some sensuous medium, and aesthetic activity as a kind of thesis (cognition), and not aesthesis (sensation), is the creed of the scholastics which has its foundations in plato and Aristotle.[1] Plato's distinction between merely sensuous beauty or charm, which feeds and waters the passionate or appetitive nature of men destroying the rational one[2] and is a "soft slippery thing,"[3] and his notion of intellectual beauty is well-known.[4] Catharsis spoken of by Plato and Aristotle as the function of art can well be interpreted as ecstasy through which the passions are undergone in a spirit of sacrifice so as not only to be relieved of them temporally as waste products but also actively to contemplate them as presented in appropriate forms, and thus, to be purified of them more or less permanently.[5] Aristotle's theory of imitation means really imitation of an *idea* of nature and, so, of the appropriate or the philosophical truth which nature embodies. Art, thus, seeks to express the truth underlying a natural object and not to copy it.[6] There is a vital distinction between the 'subject' of art and its content. Plato, while he denounced art as imitation, and took imitation as the slavish copy of natural objects, denounced only what he held to be false art. That he had a notion of a true art is proved by his praise of such art as depicted the true or ideal being instead of the actual and the apparent one, that is, the universals instead of the particulars.[7] Certainly, this truth or universal form cannot be an actually given object to be copied out but an idea to be visualized and expressed through the medium of some recognizable matter. This happens in representative art where natural objects serve as subjects for the artist to express some ideal content which, according to Plato, is an intellectual idea or philosophical truth. In non-representational arts, such as abstract drawings and music, no such recognizable subject-matter is used and some idea is expressed more or less directly. These arts are still called imitations because of their depicting the appropriate rhythms or forms of our emotive nature. These forms are the truths of our emotions to be apprehended intellectually and given to the senses. As no recognizable matter intervenes between the idea and its imitation and the artistic activity is purely imitative of the idea and not of any natural object or appearance, this form of art is held as purer and higher than the representative one. Schopenhauer, we know, regarded music to be the highest form of art for this, according to him, was reality itself while other forms *represented* reality in various manners. All this goes to show how one's intellectual metaphysics rules one's aesthetics.

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[1] See A. K. Coomaraswamy : *Figures of Speech or Figures of Thought* (1946). Also Jacques Maritain : *Art and Scholasticism* (1946)

[2] See *Republic*, 606-07

[3] *Lysis*, 30.

[4] See, e.g., *Timaeus*, 80B, where he says that a musical composition affords sensuous pleasure to the ignorant and intellectual one to the intellegent. See also *Phaedrus*, 244D and *Ion*, 354-55 where he says that it is God who inspires the artist.

[5] See Coomaraswamy: *Op.cit*, chap. I.

The opposite situation, one's aesthetical experience ruling one's metaphysics, may be shown from much of Indian thought. Indian aesthetics has been in the main unaffected by any intellectual metaphysics. Aesthetic contemplation has been at the outset regarded as distinct from theoretic understanding and beauty distinct from intellectual truth. While Plato and the Scholastics[8] hold artistic activity to be a feast of reason, the Indian aestheticians take it as a feast of feeling. Of course a clear difference is made between a feeling as excited by an object and suffered in a passive manner and one actively enjoyed when one freely feels for or sympathizes with some depicted feeling suffered by no real person. Yet the latter kind of feeling is not confused with a cognition of feeling such as might be obtainable in some intellectual activity, normal or supernormal.[9] We have to feel the love or sorrow depicted in art as we would have felt it in reality, only in aesthetic enjoyment of it we have a consciousness of our feeling as freely undergone. In sympathizing with the feeling of our friends or relatives we have yet some compulsion and passivity, but in aesthetic enjoyment there is not even this compulsion. This consciousness of freedom and this "psychical distancing"[10]does make a difference in the flavour of the feeling, but it certainly cannot petrify it into an object of cognition or crystallize it into a neat concept . The feeling is the support and feeder of the aesthetic enjoyment which is feeling *par excellence* and no knowing. Those who stress the transcendent aspect of feelings in aesthetic enjoyment and, so, underline the qualifying words of the phrases "objectification of feelings" and "disinterested contemplation of emotions," which are commonly used to describe artistic attitude, forget that the feelings so objectified or contemplated must be undergone in order that they may be so treated. If the treatment kills the feeling, then artistic enjoyment collapses.[11]

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[6] See Aristotle's *Poetics* (Bywater's Translation), chap.9. The poet is "to describe not the thing that has happened, but the kind of thing that might happen, i.e. what is possible as being probable or necessary... Hence poetry is more philosophic and of graver import than history." Also "The beautiful is the appropriate" (*Topics*).

[7] See *Republic*, 484, 472, 597-98.

[8] We exclude Aristotle as his position in this respect is a bit different.

Now this Indian theory of art is based on a direct experience of art and not on any intellectual predilection about it of metaphysical origin. It is more a psychology of artistic experience than a philosophy of beauty. Beauty is apt to be held, as in the Western tradition, as a metaphysical object and, so, readily identified with truth and reality following the principle of parsimony. Indian aestheticians do not consider beauty as an objective reality so much. They deal with the perception of the beautiful which is an enjoyed characteristic like taste or flavour[12] rather than as substantive entity. Instead of interpreting beauty in terms of some intellectual idea of truth and reality and our aesthetic perception in terms of the cognitive faculties,[13] some Indian philosophers tend to interpret ultimate truth and reality in terms of beauty as a subjective relish and cognition as an element in aesthetic perception or feeling. One Vedic seer speaks of the Supreme Reality as essentially of the nature of aesthetic relish (*rasa*)[14] and to know it is to realize or feel it.That is, it is given in unitive knowledge and not in one characterized by subject-object duality[15] which is, however, knowledge properly so called. Another Vedic seer speaks of God's creating the world like an art-object and of artists as imitating God in their artsitic activity which is, therefore, a kind of worship to God and a means to self-realizatiion.[16] Some aestheticians have described artistic enjoyment as similar to the beatitude that accompanies one's experience of Reality itself.[17] Creation itself is regarded by some Vedic seers as a shadowing forth of the world which has no reality co-ordinate with the creator.[18] The concept of *māyā*, which is the pivot of Vedāntic metaphysics, can have meaning only in an aesthetic sense, and *līlā*, which literally means play and is the Indian answer to the question 'Why does God create?' has been conceived after imaginative recreation or artistic contemplation. It is well known in theology that God,being perfect,cannot have any real thing to serve,any real want from which he might be suffering, nor can he lapse from perfection and suffer any real change. All this imperfect world of change and multiplicity, therefore, has to be considered as illusory, shadowed forth by God for his imaginative recreation which is but a sign of his joy and abundance. We, in so far as we are artistically active, imitate Him and taste the divine joy.

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[9] In Indian philosophy, particularly in the Yoga school, feelings are thought to be cognised and so transcended. But the Indian aestheticians do not regard this knowledge of feelings to be the object of artistic comtemplation. See, e.g., *Mammaṭa* : *Kāvyaprakāśa* (a work of 11th century) 4.28, and commentary thereon where he says he summarises Abhinavagupta's (a 10th century famous Indian thinker) views.

[10] See author's paper, "Psychical distance in Indian Aesthetics", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Dec., 1948.

[11] Wordsworth recognised this when he wrote of poetry: " It takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity, the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reaction, the tranquillity disappears and an emotion kindled, so that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced and does itself actually exist before the mind." *Preface to Lyrical Ballads* (1800). The intellectual aestheticians generally quote the first clause and omit the rest.

[12] *Rasa*, the key-term in Indian aesthtics, signifying aesthetic relish, literally means taste or flavour.

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[13] See e. g. Liebnietz- Wolff theory of aesthetic perception as a confused conception. Though Kant criticised this theory, he, nevertheless, held aesthetic perception to be a free play of understanding and imagination and 'cognition in general' though not a conceptual one. He considered emotion to be *a posterior* and a consecutive fact in aesthetic perception and not its constituent or ground. See *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment*, 9.

[14] *Taittirīya, VII.*

[15] We are reminded of the criticism of dualistic knowledge by Bradley and Bergson. The former spoke of reality being knowable in the manner of love and the latter in the manner of aesthetic sympathy.

[16] *Aitareya.*

[17] e.g.,one describes it as *Parabrahmāsvādasaçiva*,literally meaning similar to the relish of the Absolute Reality (or God). *Dhvanyāloka Loçana* (2.4), a 10th century work by Abhinavagupta.

[18] See Śaṅkara's commentary on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, 1.4.3. and 4.3.7.

Now, though aesthetical ideas abound in Indian philosophy which views reality predominantly as an experience rather than as an object among objects, yet no attempt has been made to elaborate an aesthetical metaphysics. Intellectual prepossessions could not be thoroughly got over with the result that there are many knots and inconsistencies even in an aesthetically orientated philosophy. For instance, the relation between the Absolute, conceived as a Self, and the individual selves has not been clarified. But we may smoothen out some of these rough ends and put aesthetical metaphysics in a better light. This type of metaphysics differs from an intellectual one in that while the latter holds our scientific knowledge to be the pattern for knowledge of reality itself, the former holds our aesthetic experience to be such pattern. There is nothing to decide between the two approaches except perhaps our temperament. For metaphysics cannot be directly verified in ordinary experience and it must be judged by its internal consistency and *a priori* plausibility.

To put our aesthetical metaphysics in order, then, we have to recognize reality as an experience such as we have in art, the objects experienced having no independent reality apart from the experience. An aesthetically enjoyed object is not felt as independent of the experience, it appears as a sign for some feeling which is freely undergone and so enjoyed, as we have shown before. When we do not enjoy something in this manner but only know it and use it we are affected by feelings which we cannot freely contemplate and then the object appears to be independent of the experience.[19] An unenjoyed but merely known and felt object, which is sought to be enjoyed but proves refractory, appears ugly. Now the objects of the world are generally known (intellectually), used and felt (passively suffered) and so taken for independent realities in our ordinary mental attitude that may be termed realistic. But in our aesthetic attitude towards them, they become parts of ourselves, each suffused with a particular feeling which is now freely enjoyed for its own sake. The objects now appear as symbols of feelings they arouse in our realistic attitude, meaning these feelings instead of exciting them. We speak of dark clouds as meaning sombreness, rose—youth and passion, white doves—purity, gentleness and divine love, spires—aspirations, and so on. Poets delineate feelings with the help of these objects which serve them as imagery. So that in the aesthetic mood we dissolve and appropriate this world with the solute of aesthetic emotion which wells up as soon as we regard the primary feelings excited in us by the world as objects to be enjoyed for their own sakes and not undergone passively or used to serve some practical purpose. (The pleasurable feelings inform us of the desirability and the painful ones of the undesirability of things.) Whatever is not so appropriated in the aesthetic mood appears ugly. But nothing really remains ultimately unappropriated. What appears at one stage of aesthetic mood as ugly is but difficult beauty. The difficulty is due to many reasons, such as, too much or too little complication or magnitude, obvious unpleasantness or danger to life. This difficulty is overcome in a higher stage of aesthetic contemplation when what was ugly becomes sublimely beautiful. Now this stage of subjectivity, in which natural objects appear to be objects of art, symbolizing or expressing feelings, which are enjoyed (and not suffered as excited feelings) is one akin to the Absolute Self or God. God's experience of the world is an aesthetic one, the whole universe is created by Him as a piece of art to be enjoyed for its own sake. He is then a grade of subjectivity and we approach Him qualitatively as we succeed in developing an aesthetic attitude to the world, overcoming our usual bio-physico-intellectual one to the same. We approximate the Absolute mind qualitatively as our experience of the world becomes more inclusive and unified.

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[19] This is the realistic-pragmatic attitude to objects in which they excite feelings which we suffer passively instead of enjoying self-consciously. This is the intellectual or cognitive attitude which, as has been shown by Bergson, is really pragmatic. And as I .A. Richards has pointed out, feelings have a cognitive aspect, they serve practice, we know the feelings they arouse. (*Principles of Literary Criticism* p. 98.) So that the cognitive-affective-pragmatic attitude is a single attitude which may be shortly indicated as the realistic one as distinguished from the aesthetic.

One important point to recognize here is that personality, mind or self-hood, whether of God or man, is never an object or thing which God creates and enjoys and man ordinarily knows and suffers. It is nothing, and if by mind we mean some objective mental or spiritual stuff, it is also no-mind as the Zen Buddhist puts it. My self or my mind is never known as a meant object but only as a subject, symbolized by "I", who means objects. So God is no entity to be known by us but a grade of subjectivity. And since grades of subjectivity are a fact, we being sometimes in the dream or illusory states, sometimes in the intellectual-realistic one and sometimes in the aesthetic one, we can very well imagine God to be a grade of subjectivity immanent in our subjectivity. Since God is no thing, the problem how we can be parts of Him cannot be insuperable. And this will also make it easier for us to think how we can have a realistic attitude to the world. For then we are in the lower level of subjectivity just as in our dream and illusions we are in a level lower to our ordinary realistic one and take for reality, suffer and use objects that are illusory from the empirical standpoint. We are in our ordinary realistic attitude to God as our dream-selves to our waking self. We may be said to relish aesthetically our fantasies, enjoy actively the feelings suffered there. Even in our dreams we may be said to enjoy, unself-consciously, the feelings we suffer there. So it may be said that even in our main realistic attitude, when we do not think of our feelings of joy or sorrow being freely enjoyed instead of being passively suffered, we may be still unself-consciously so enjoying them. Using this rather paradoxical idea of unself-conscious enjoyment we may say that God is ever enjoying his creation, which has been created for this purpose, in different degrees of unself-consciousness, less when we view the world aesthetically and more when we view it realistically. And since we do not have a perfect vision of the whole universe as a thing of beauty, God or the Absolute self-immanent in us has to be regarded as overwhelmingly unself-conscious becoming more or less conscious through our aesthetic activity directed to the contemplation of the world.

This is a sketch of an aesthetical metaphysics, which, as presented here, leaves many a question unanswered. But we must not extend the scope of the present endeavour beyond a bare indication of a possibility of such a metaphysics as our chief interest here is aesthetics and not metaphysics. We have merely shown how the Indian aesthetical categories, *rasa*, meaning active enjoyment of feelings, and *līlā*, meaning imaginative recreation, may be the bases of an aesthetically orientated metaphysics in which the ultimate reality might be considered as a supreme Self shadowing forth this universe and enjoying it through us, partly self-consciously but predominantly unself-consciously. This supreme Self or God may thus be conceived as immanent in us and realizable by us and not a transcendent being which poses many difficult problems. It goes without saying that this kind of metaphysical speculation, though it has many affinities with some speculations in the West, has its own difficulties. But to discuss these or to support the scheme offered here would lead us outside the scope of this introductory essay.

The Problem of Moral Evil : A Vedāntic Approach

22

Western idealism has shown great insight into the problem of moral evil, whose several characteristics it has ably brought out. But it has not been able to reach a convincing solution of the problem for want of an adequate metaphysic of the soul. Rather, if consistently worked out, it lands us in embarrassing contradictions. We propose to discuss this problem of moral evil or sin and to advance a solution of it based on an interpretation of Vedānta.

Western idealism (e.g. that of Bosanquet and Royce) has brought to light several basic principles of moral evil. They have a *prima facie* plausibility, and are more or less universally accepted in modern philosophy. They are as follows : (1) Moral evil is due to the finite-infinite nature of man : his self is torn between its present and the transcendence of the present, having its reach beyond its grasp, its content beyond its existence. (2) The nature of man being essentially finite-infinite, moral evil is inevitable. All men, regardless of their moral qualities, are sinners. The doctrine of original sin is defended implicitly by Western idealism (and also explicitly by Royce). Sin is variously regarded as erroneously absolutizing the finite self, as limited response to the communications we receive from our higher self which is infinite consciousness, and as rebellious self-will. All these are but various ways of conceiving the same subject-matter, and resolve into the self-same basic conception of sin as confusing the limited with the unlimited, a relative good with the absolute one. And it is natural to suppose that whatever progress the self may make there must be some degree of finiteness, that all response must be accompanied by some limit, and all self-surrender by some consciousness of it, all consciences by some conscientiousness. So that sin is an inevitable corollary of the finite-infinite status of man. (3) From this it follows that good is interpenetrated by evil, a finite good is finite evil when it appears as absolute good; anything short of the Absolute or the Infinite is tainted with imperfection. (4) Lastly, the inevitability of moral evil jeopardizes moral responsibility.

But it is precisely here that Western idealism is most vulnerable.

For man cannot, by any amount of rationalization, really shake off moral responsibility. He feels this to be an undeniable consequence of his moral freedom which he cannot disown without self-contradiction. There are the facts of his ethical speculation with the distinction between 'is' and 'ought', of choice of some rules of conduct amongst a number of alternatives, and of his self-repentance and self-reproach; in the face of these any inclination to deny the freedom of the self must be called perverted.

Yet the inevitability of sin follows from the finite-infinite nature of the human self, and to abandon the former entails a thorough overhauling of the Western idealist's version of moral evil. To this last mentioned task we now apply our modest efforts.

The principles regarding moral evil as laid down by Western idealism are but half-truths. Man is not finite-infinite, eternally torn between finite existence and infinite essence, he is not two (finite and infinite) at the same time and in the same plane of reality. He is an individual finite self, and he eternally appears to be such only when he, under the sway of cosmic illusion (*māyā*), adopts an individualistic outlook and, so, sees multiplicity and difference where in reality there is but identity. He can at any moment (of course, depending upon his self-culture or *sādhanā*) transcend his finitude and individuality and become identified with the 'One without a second', the Absolute. From this place his former being, tainted with individuality, imperfection and sin, will appear to be an unintelligible dream that is no more. His past individuality cannot be denied to have appeared, but because it now appears to be an object (you), while the real self is to be understood only as a subject (I), it must be accepted as an illusory presentation. Moreover, it is not a mere individual appearance like the appearance of a snake in a rope, for to correct the latter we but posit an objective world, while to correct the former we have to realize the illusoriness of Objectivity itself, that is, of the individual (the objectified self) and the entire world of which it is the reference-point. Thus the individual is the result of a cosmic illusion. Moreover, individuality cannot be asserted either as real or as unreal. It cannot be asserted as real when it is transcended and seen as an appearance, and it cannot be asserted as unreal for to do this one has to be an individual to see the unreality of individuality. For this reason the cosmic principle of *illusion* (*māyā*) is called *anirvāchya*, unassertable. This is the principle of individuality, also the principle of ignorance.

But rational philosophy may refuse to accept a state of being of the self in which the individual self is said to appear as an illusory presentation no longer admitted as real nor asserted as unreal, but only rejected as a false shadow-show created by the undifferentiated self to beguile itself. We will put forward the following pleas in favour of our (i.e. Vedāntic) thesis regarding the reality of an indifferentiated transcendent Self and the illusoriness of the individual one. (1) This may be accepted on the authority of the mystics of all countries (including the Upaniṣadic *Ṛṣis*) who claim to have experienced this state of highest being. (2) This may be first granted as a hypothesis which will gain truth-value as it succeeds in solving various problems of philosophy (ethics, aesthetics, cosmology etc.). We shall presently show that the hypothesis of an unindividual Self and of an individual self, regarded only as illusory, solves our problem of moral evil. (3) An analysis of moral consciousness in repentance indicates the possible reality of a higher Self transcending and sublating the lower individual one. In repentance the Self regards with wonder and dismay its past self as an individual, an object to be addressed as 'you' while his real self is regarded as the subject. Yet the past self is not a dead object, it is believed to be somehow 'I', tinged with subjectivity. Thus the past self, the individual, is at once an object and a subject, 'you' and 'I'. This contradiction makes the individual an illusory object; the repentant self is the unindividual Self that is 'I' (subject) and never 'you' (object). The individual and its activities are regarded as false appearances, not to be taken as real yet not assertable as unreal. (For they did appear and are not as unreal as sky-lotus). Thus there is a state of spiritual consciousness which points to the possibility of transcending permanently individuality and its accompanying finitude and imperfection.

So that man is not finite-infinite in the sense that there is waged in him a conflict between the two poles of this being; rather he is essentially infinite and illusorily finite. There is no conflict in him for the two do not exist together in the same plane of reality. Instead of a conflict there is a kind of alternation in him, sudden lapse from the state of absolute being and sudden awakening into the latter. All conflict is in the plane of individuality, differentiation and finitude; in the absolute Self there is but identity, not a harmony of the opposites.

This explains why moral evil may not be inevitable. It is inevitable only when man considers himself an individual, that is, erroneously absolutizes the finite. For as an individual he will attribute his sin to individuality which, however, enlarged through sympathy and altruism, falls short of absolute universality and which is accompanied by limit, self-will, and conscientiousness (i.e. ego-sense, *ahaṃkāra*). But man may as well consider himself to be, and realize through appropriate self-discipline (*yoga-sādhanā*), infinite, undifferented consciousness, eternally free and unaware of any limit or bondage. Its so-called lapse into individuality is but free illusory creation by magic-power (*māyāśakti*). It is only the individual who regards his individuality as real; the unindividual magician, Brahman or Self, does not take them for reality. And the magic-power is no restriction of His being. (It may be remarked that Brahman as weilding *māyāśakti* is *Īśvara* (*Māyādhīśa*), while Brahman itself is to be conceived without any reference to anything else than Brahman).

Thus moral evil is not absolutely inevitable. It is only inevitable so long as we choose to remain forgetful of our essential infinitude and suffer, as individuals, bondage and unrest (pleasure-pain). And since the inevitability of sin is not absolute, moral responsibility is not jeopardized. The individual, as an individual, is certainly fully responsible for his immorality. In fact the repentant self, though wondering how it could be that he at all sinned and though alienating his past self as a miserable appearance, yet takes full responsibility of his sin. For he finds the past self, the individual object (you) still somehow tinged with subjectivity and so somehow belonging to him.

In moral consciousness there is a meeting of the two selves. The absolute Self witnesses the individual self with wonder and pity. But the individuality is not altogether disowned, the punishment due to it is entertained. The punished self is, however, again the individual self, the witnessing self is the judge and administrator of punishment. The embodied self is the accused, and it is always an object that is still somehow the subject, a given contradiction, an appearance. In repentance, self-reproach, and acceptance of some punishment the sinner's soul is one with the 'universal soul' (as the stoics say) or the Absolute Lord (Īśvara of Vedānta) who is but Brahman shining against, weilding and contemplating, *māyā*. This is the basis of the exaltation of confession and repentance in Christianity which has not explicated it with the help of an elaborate metaphysic of the soul such as Vedānta presents us.

Thus we find that Vedānta can explain moral evil by doing justice to all the facts of the case, viz. our apparent finite-infinite nature appearing as the ground of moral evil, the apparent universality and inevitability of moral evil, our feeling of moral responsibility as individuals and denial of it as the unindividual self.

Another fact which Vedānta takes care of and which is recognized by Western idealism is the interpenetration of good and evil. For Western idealism any actual good is limited and falls short of the absolute good, so that there is an imperfection and a tension between actuality and ideality. For Vedānta any actual good is determinate belonging to the world of multiplicity and difference, and, so, is but *māyā*. Any actual good has a background of evil over against which it stands as the other; while in absolute good there is no such contrast, it being the undifferentiated being without name and form. Vedānta offers a far deeper and sounder metaphysical explanation of interpenetration of good and evil than does Western idealism. For while the latter view cannot quite forbid a conception of infinitely progressing good approaching asymptotically to the absolute good, the former does so forbid. The reason is that Vedānta (of course we mean Advaita Vedānta throughout) stands for an uncompromising monism, and admits no continuity of the one with the many, of Brahman with the world. They are altogether two different planes of reality with no empirically causal connection between them. But Western idealism offers a qualified monism where the Absolute spirit is said somehow to embrace and harmonize the many. The Absolute of Advaita Vedānta is an abstract identity, while that of Western idealism is a concrete universal. As a result of this there is no scope for a continuous passage from relative good to the absolute one in Vedānta. One has to forsake all thought of worldly good and its reward, of virtue and moral merit, in order to realize the absolute good that is but his true Self. Thus the interpenetration of good and evil conceived here is more fundamental than that conceived in Western idealism, which admits a progressive approach towards the absolute from the relative. If individuality is regarded as the principle of moral evil, Western idealism conceives the possibility of a development of this individuality towards greater and greater comprehensiveness to reach an ideal state of being where it harmonizes all multiplicity. But Vedānta, though it does not deny a development of the individual in comprehensiveness, tells us that this is not the highroad to the Absolute. We are not to court and compromise with multiplicity keeping our individuality (ego or *ahaṃkāra*) intact, rather we have to forsake all multiplicity as well as our individuality in one single momentous spiritual act realizing them to be but false shows that veil and distort the self-identical Brahman that is our Self. The Vedānta shows a firmer and clearer grasp of the truth regarding so-called moral progress and exposes its limitation and relative futility with a greater boldness than does Western idealism.

Thus we see that Vedānta has dug deeper into the problem of moral evil than Western idealism has been able to do so far, and the solution of the problem advanced on the basis of Vedānta is far more comprehensive than that offered by the other school.*

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* I am to some extent indebted to Prof. K. C. Bhattacharya's essay 'Advaitavāda and its Spiritual Significance' (in the *Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. 1) for my interpretation of moral consciousness in repentance and of *māyā*. I am also indebted to Prof. Paul Ramsay's essay 'Idealistic view of Moral Evil' (in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, June, 1946) for providing me with an insight into the principal merits and demerits of Western idealistic theory of moral evil.

Materialism Versus Mentalism

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Relative Standpoints of Modern Science and Vedānta :

1. Matter is colloquially regarded as that which occupies space and time and has perceptible qualities. Thus stones, trees, chairs, tables are pieces of matter and we have the material universe contained in space and enduring through time. In this sense matter is but perceptible qualities in spatio-temporal order and not something *behind* these qualities supporting them, as a more sophisticated view holds it to be. This matter cannot be the stuff of the world which contains, besides perceptual qualities in spatio-temporal order, minds that perceive and act upon them and have thoughts, feelings, sensations and images, which occupy no space. And these functions—perceiving, willing, feeling, etc.—cannot be explained from matter either as its process or its modifications for the simple reason that matter is the object of some of these activities, viz. perceiving and willing, and the object cannot objectify itself becoming the subject, and it (matter) has nothing to do with the rest of the activities, thinking, feeling, etc., for they produce no material objects but such (mental) things as occupy no space. A material process must produce a material product, for if it is said to produce things that occupy no space then this causal relation between spatial and non-spatial objects becomes a riddle. Thus materialism which regards matter as sense-qualities in spatio-temporal order is an untenable philosophy.

2. Let us see if materialism can fare better if matter be regarded in its more sophisticated sense as the substrate of perceptual qualities which inhere in it. Here there seems to be a way to explain mind from matter, for matter is now a dark occult substance which may be thought to undergo such modification as to function as mind. Thus we have the interesting conception of matter becoming conscious of itself and acting on itself and spinning thoughts, feelings, etc. out of itself. But, as will be seen here, such a feat of philosophical unification can be possible only by keeping things dark and mysterious and gratuitously endowing them with all kinds of capacities and powers so that anything may be conceived to function as any other thing. Matter as the substrate of perceptual qualities is a dark thing that under the cover of darkness may carry out any philosophical duty one demands of it. Let us first examine this concept of matter and assess its intrinsic worth and then we shall see how far it can explain mind.

Matter as a substrate of perceptual qualities is not itself perceptible, and then its relation with perceptible qualities becomes a mystery. How does it support and hold together these qualities cannot be understood. If the qualities are regarded as not essentially different from their substrate but as modifications of it, the question is : How did one uniform prime-stuff become so modified that out of a qualityless mass qualities appeared, and if they appeared, when and at what quarter did they first appear? If they appeared at one particular time and place rather than at another, the reason for it may be asked. If matter is all in all, then no such reason for the preference of time and place can be given, the prime-stuff being always identical everywhere. And then, if to avoid this difficulty of relating the qualityless substance, which is in fact no thing (the non-being of Plato), to qualities which are said to be its modifications, we endow it with some initial qualities like those attached to ether and elementary particles in some physical theories, there will be other difficulties. For now the questions will be, how can a sensible thing be the prime-stuff, why of all things has this been the ultimate building material, and cannot we analyse this stuff further and find what it is made of but must stop at it ? If it is a particle, why has it just this size and why is it not further breakable ? If it is a point-mass, how can points make extension and, as Dirac pointed out, the electrical charge of a point-mass becomes infinite ? If it is a continuous body, modifications are due to undulations in it, but undulations imply change in density and this can be understood only as changes in the number of particles in a certain volume, that is, as changes in the 'packing factor'; so that a continuous body as the prime-stuff resolves itself into a discontinuous one and we know the difficulties of the latter.[1] And then, conceiving the prime-stuff as endowed with some basic qualities does not entirely solve the problem of relating it to observed qualities. When the prime-stuff is qualityless, the observed qualities cannot be causally explained from it. But when the prime-stuff has some qualities, even then it cannot explain the other qualities, for how a conjunction of a few qualities produce new qualities remains a mystery. The naturalists try to dilute the mystery by such expressions as 'emergence' and 'new substantial relatedness' which in reality beg the question. The fact remains that if A and B produce C and if A, B, C are distinct qualities, no amount of ingenuity in conceiving the relation between A and B can explain the new quality C.

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[1] There are some other difficulties regarding any physical hypothesis of a substance, and these the scientists have themselves found. Heisenberg's Principle of Uncertainty, which denies the simultaneous existence of absolute position and velocity of a particle, is interpreted by some (e.g. Schrödinger and Cassirer) as to imply the non-existence of ultimate particles; as a particle without absolute position and velocity at the same time is inconceivable. The wave-mechanics of new physics does not conceive of any physical and picturable medium, it is just a mathematical device to integrate phenomena. The Relativity theory also tends to do away with matter and gravity, and so, all causal explanations of phenomena. The space-time, in terms of which it explains phenomena, is no physical substance but a feature of the mathematical law of disposition of events or phenomena. (That is why one speaks of such incomprehensibles as a 'curved space' and as time as a fourth dimension of space welded into it. These are but attempts at interpreting in commonsense terms the mathematical formulas that result when one seeks to describe mathematically the dispositions of events in the universe. These formulas have some similarity of form and function with those appearing in our ordinary

3. All this goes to show that the prime-stuff, either without any qualities or with some, is an idea involving all sorts of difficulties. Such a prime-stuff cannot serve to be the foundation of the physical (perceptible) universe itself, what to speak of its serving as the foundation of the mental world consisting of perceiving, willing, etc. The qualityless prime-stuff may be conceived to act as the mind since we do not know anything positive about it, and as it is gratuitously made either to support or to produce perceptible qualities, it may also be made to perceive these qualities and to do other jobs peculiar to mind. Even then the difference between producing perceptible qualities in space and producing volitions, feelings, thoughts, etc. which are not in space has to be ignored to effect a major philosophical unification ; and a still more glaring difference, that between perceived objects and the perceiving subject, has to be overlooked. The allegory of a matter getting so fine as to reflect itself hardly helps, for perceiving is not mirroring, the mirror is not conscious of the image it produces, while the mind is. It is self-conscious.

If we give up the qualityless stuff as matter and take up one with some quality (ether, electrons, etc.), we have a more sensible material substance so far as the variety and regularity of qualities in the material world are at least descriptively explained in its terms (as is done in natural science). But this material substance is more ill-fitted than its

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(classical) mechanics which deal with events in the neighbourhood of the world where distances and velocities are not so great as would be affected (in their measurement) by the consideration of the finite velocity of light. The similarity between the formulas of the Relativity and classical mechanics leads to such interpretations of the former in terms of space and time and to such confusions.) New physics has abandoned the notions of substance and causality (the latter in the sense of productivity and also of *necessary* connection) and is satisfied with phenomena or events and their description.

qualityless brother to take over the characters and responsibilities of mind. For a dark occult agent may somehow be conceived to be a versatile genius (such as to produce perceptible qualities and perceive them also), but there is hardly any scope for an electron or ether-wave to perform such tricks unless we want them to amuse ourselves. Any modification of the dark qualityless stuff may be imagined (of course ignoring the difference between subject and object) to act as mind, and the perceptible qualities may then be placed in one line of modifications among many possible lines ; but such a procedure cannot be adopted with equal facility in the case of electrons or ether-waves, as their modifications are known to be material products ; and to conceive that certain chance combinations of electrons or ether-waves may produce mind is like imagining that a certain miraculous combinations of letters of the alphabet may produce not only a book but also the meaning behind it. To conceive miraculous changes taking place in an unknown mysterious thing is easier than it is to conceive in a thing we somewhat know. The dependence of mind or consciousness on matter can never be proved by observation or inference, which can at most prove the appearance of brain out of matter. But even this transformation cannot be understood unless the idea of consciousness itself is employed. For any purposive formation in matter implies consciousness operating from behind. Brain and life have not been so far constructed in the laboratory (that is, by any mechanical means). To argue that the universe was at first without man and, so, without mind, which appeared later with man, is simply begging the question, for it assumes that consciousness must need a material basis, a brain. The experiments on extra-sensory perception (E.S.P.) and spirits, the extraordinary knowledge of the past and future and distant objects possessed by some mystics and our experience of so-called 'loss of consciousness' in a swoon or deep sleep (which on analysis shows we remain conscious though we have no perceptions, thoughts, etc.),[2] all go to show that though consciousness ordinarily functions through a brain, it is not dependent for its existence and some functions on the latter. Again, the evolutionist's argument is self-stultifying, for the state of affairs as it was before the advent of man is viewed as it would have appeared to man had he been there. In fact, it is too well known that we cannot derive mind from nature just as we cannot leap over our own shadow.

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[2] This follows from the fact of continuity of personaltiy which is not broken in sleep or swoon. Then we have a memory of the absence of any sense-experience during deep sleep; on waking we feel we slept well and had no objects to attend. This shows we were not quite unconscious then but were conscious of the absence of objects. This absence cannot be said to be *merely inferred* from absence of conditions of knowledge (e.g. lack of attention) and not directly known, for we cannot infer anything unless we have previously known it directly and have established the concomitance between it and something from which it may be inferred. In fact, the absence of sense-experience must be directly experienced in order to ascertain the conditions of (sensible) knowledge, if we adopt the method of difference besides that of agreement.

4. Thus the mind is not a product of matter. But the fact that mind knows and acts on matter shows that they are not entirely disjoined from each other in character. So may it not be that matter is a product of mind ? The concept of mind, very often employed to try this ontological unification, is that mind is a special kind of matter (a mental substance) existing in a different sort of space (for mental occurrences, said to be in the 'head', are not in ordinary space) and having freedom while ordinary matter is determined by causal laws. This is a para-mechanical or paramaterial theory of mind which apparently helps to explain the psychological phenomena and also (somehow, at least verbally) to explain matter which is regarded as a form of mind. But this is a wrong theory of mind (apart from its other difficulties), for the so-called acts of mind, the cognitive, conative and affective, are not really acts or occurrences but dispositions or ways of explaining overt performances in the same way as brittleness explains why glass breaks into pieces when hit by a stone. That is to say, knowing, willing and motivating or having inclinations like vanity, love, etc. are not themselves occurrences (in a special space) which may be causes of certain behavioural occurrences, but they signify certain ways or laws of these occurrences and are *reasons* of them. The so-called mental occurrences are not perceived as such, but are postulated to explain the overt performances. If these so-called mental occurrences are causes of overt deeds, what causes them? An objective mode of answer will land us in an infinite regress. And then, these ghostly internal causes being in a special sort of space, their (causal) relation with the overt occurrences becomes mysterious; so that the mental dispositions explaining physical behaviour are not a special sort of existents; and so, mind is no para-material field of these objects. Sensations, feelings and images which it produces are occurrences, but they are not perceptible objects to require the same sort of (causal) explanation as does a lightning flash or a rise in the river. They are merely noticed and not observed, that is to say, they are not known as objects, independent and determined. Images are definitely known as mind-made and so, as non-objects; while sensations and feelings are never known as objects (though not known as mind-made); so that mind as

an existent objective entity causing these phenomena is a spurious idea, as is mind regarded as a special sort of field or existence to house the so-called mental acts of knowledge, willing, motivating, etc.[3]

5. If the mind as an objective matter — like entity reflectivng matter, causing behaviour and producing sensations, feelings and images — fails as a satisfactory psychological theory, it need not be entertained for its certain affinity with matter, and so, for its possible capacity to appropriate matter and facilitate philosophical unification. A concept of mind must be first obtained which does full justice to the psychological facts and then its ability to explain matter has to be looked for.

The essential characteristic of mind or consciousness is subjectivity. When I say 'I know, will, feel, imagine, etc.' I am having an experience and am meaning quite differently from what I do when I say 'The mirror reflects', 'The train moves', 'The magnet attracts', and the difference lies in the sense of subjectivity and freedom that I am having and expressing through 'I' which signifies no meant object but symbolizes the unique subject that means and expresses objects through words. When I say 'You know, will, think, etc.' or 'He knows, wills, thinks, etc.' I am still meaning not an objective causal occurrence but a subjective agent like 'me' effecting something; all this I know through analogy and sympathetic understanding (empathy). 'I know, will, etc.' is very simply understandable, for it is directly given in experience, but 'My mind knows, wills, etc.' is not so understood unless 'my mind' stands for 'myself' or 'I'. For mind as an objective apparatus is never really known to exist and to do anything of the sort denoted by knowing, willing, imagining, etc. Always it is I that know, think, will, etc. and not anything in me that does these things. I imagine such a ghost in me only when I imagine my knowing, willing, etc. either prospectively or retrospectively that is, only when I objectify myself. Still I know, it is my own self, this 'I' that does things (and analogically it is your 'I' that does your knowing, willing, etc.). The objectified self in imagination, 'you' or 'he', is still felt as my very self, this 'I'. Otherwise there would be an infinite hierarchy of selves or consciousness within me.

This mind as subjectivity is quite clear to us; the confusion arises only when we try to speak of it as an object to be known like any other object. That is why the Mādhyamika mystics and the Zen Buddhists call this non-objective cause of objective occurrences as 'no-thing' and no-mind. In fact, in the objective mode of signifying it, it is better to call it 'no-thing', as a thing is known as an object and no-thing would express this non-objectivity or subjectivity of the mind. I am 'no-thing', therefore I am immortal, for all things die. And as I am no-thing I am not caused, for causality applies to things.

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[3] Some of these arguments against a paramechanical theory of the mind are taken from Prof. Gilbert Ryle's *Concept of Mind* (Hutchinson Univ. Press). The concept of mind offered in this essay is however very different from Prof. Ryle's.

Now this 'I', known only as a subject, is found to be the cause of the overt behaviour. To explain this we may either reduce mind to matter or matter to mind. The first alternative has been already considered and found untenable. Let us consider the second. Matter is objective sense-perceptions ordered in space-time and obeying certain causal laws. To explain this matter from mind (which is like my self known as the subject that knows and acts on matter) as a product of the latter is impossible so long as we have the idea of the mind as what I ordinarily mean by 'I'. For though I know and act on matter I do not perceive myself to be the cause of matter in the way I perceive myself to be the cause of my images. I call up images but I know my percepts to be independent of me and my hands and feet to be movable but not created by me. Yet experience provided by my imagination shows that it is somehow 'I' or a self that can produce something like matter (while matter cannot produce mind). To conceive matter as dependent on me I may entertain the idea of some unself-conscious self in me so that I may say, 'It is I who really produced matter and regulate it, only I am unconscious of it.' That is, I have to conceive in me a different mode or grade of self of whom I am at present unconscious and whose images are these percepts that characterize matter. There is no other way than this (initially) analogical and extrapolating procedure to understand why I, being no-thing, can know matter and act on it. In knowing matter I am having the images that the other self in me has produced, only I am not conscious of this other self (who operates from behind the scenes) as mine, and, so, am not conscious of the images as produced, and am treating them as independent objects, as real. This is illusory objectivity and is like treating a snake as real and objective forgetting that it is a subjective phenomenon created by me. When I act on a piece of matter (moving my limbs and through them some other thing) I am changing some of the images of the other self in me and so am acting as its instrument (following its playful will to change images), but as I am forgetful of my identity with it I am surprised how this action has been possible. In having my own images in imagination I am but freely exercising the capacity and propensity of the mind that is no-thing to produce at my will images which are also no-things, for they are known as non-objective non-entities (in my mind) only taken as objects in a make-believe spirit. They are objectifications and not objects, which implies that they are subjective phenomena and known as such. In knowing and acting I am passive and in imagining I am active. In sensing and feeling (e.g. in having a toothache and a prick of remorse) I am partly active and partly passive. Then I am sort of perceiving something vaguely and willing either to continue or discontinue the experience which may be pleasurable or painful, and I am imagining some associated things to diagnose the experience. An ache or a feeling is itself not recognized ; it is recognized when it is located and diagnosed as a (say) toothache or a prick of (say) remorse. A sensation or a feeling then is a joint product of my higher self's images (of sensations or feelings) and wills taken as my own and objective, and my own images. Conceiving is involved in perceptual knowledge of a complex object like a house or a man where only small bits here and there are actually perceived and the rest constructed by imagination on the basis of conception of the object. In this conceiving we have an image of our own (empirical self) which *means* (or has objective reference to) an object that is the image for my higher self (i.e. what this self has as an imagined object).

Thus what is usually known as the objective part of our experience is the creation of my other (higher and hidden) self and what is known as the subjective part is my own (empirical self's) imagination. (I have called the unself-conscious other self in me the higher one, for the images which this self has are found to be objective and universal, showing that this itself is a universal Overmind existing in our empirical egos or ordinary selves.)

6. Now the important question is : Is not this hidden higher self in a person, besides his own conscious one, a pure myth, created only to get matter swallowed up by mind ? To say that I really created my percepts called matter and I really lead them following my own rules called causal laws involves one into very serious philosophical tasks. One has to answer the following questions—

(i) May not this higher self, of which one is unconscious and yet which causes percepts in one, be a plausible hypothesis ?

(ii) How can this unself-conscious self together with the conscious self explain perception of matter and existence of unperceived and its laws ?

(iii) How is it that when I have my images I have them after my perceptual experience, while the higher self has images that are its pure inventions ? Wherefrom comes the idea of the world ?

(iv) Why is this imagining by the higher self done at all ?

Let us briefly answer these questions.

(i) The phenomenon of dream, illusion, auto-suggestion, hypnotism, and much chance and neurotic behaviour show that there is operative in us a grade of mind of which we are more or less unconscious. In dream a grade of mind operates from behind the scenes while another grade, not conscious of the first, takes the images produced by it as real and objective. The same thing happens in an illusion. What is an image to the hidden active mind becomes a percept (objective presentation) to the apparent and passive mind that takes the illusory object to be real. In auto-suggestion the hidden mind does things for the apparent mind, it recalls past events, produces beliefs, motives and volitions in the conscious mind, which remains innocent of their origin. The idea of the unself-conscious is not new to psychology, only we have to conceive here a higher and universal unconscious mind operating from behind the conscious minds of all. As the mind is nothing but self or subjectivity, there is no difficulty in conceiving two (or more) grades of this subjectivity acting simultaneously such that what is image (i.e. imagined object) to one is a percept (material or objective) to another. The latter self (the ordinary empirical) may become conscious of the former (the higher one) as the dream-self becomes conscious of the dream-producing self, and then the material world may cease to appear as real or objective as does the dream-world when the dream breaks. Is this a mere analogy ? Do not we at times really feel this world to be dream-like and our worldly passions and aspirations to be unreal ? Do we not take a detached aesthetic view of our whole existence, and are not such moments in our life the most lucid ones ? And should we ignore the affirmation of a very large body of mystics of all countries and ages to the effect that the world is a *māyā* ? And some of these mystics have given us hints as to how we may become conscious of this higher self in us and realize the illusoriness of the world. (This higher self that swallows up matter in our present philosophy is not a dark and mysterious nothing like the material substance that swallows up mind in some materialistic philosophy. The latter does the swallowing under the cover of darkness (i.e. it is a pure speculation) as shown before but the former does it in the twilight of our semi-consciousness, for we do have an intuition (Berkeley's *notion*) of the higher universal self in us, which is a no-thing, and so not known as an object, but which is no pure negation for that reason, for it is experienced, howsoever faintly, as a subject. This experience of the higher self and the world as an illusory projection can be clarified and deepened by spiritual discipline or phenomenological research).

(ii) As to the second question, we may briefly point out that as the percepts and their laws are universal, this grade of self in me of which I am ordinarily unconscious is also universal. It explains matter that is perceived by the conscious (empirical) mind in the manner stated before. It also explains the existence of matter that is not perceived by any conscious mind, for this universal self, not needing any physical basis like the conscious mind, (which also, as has been shown before, does not *necessarily* need a brain) has in its imagination all matter. Matter is what this universal self images forth. My perception of matter implies its objective existence independent of perception; this feeling of objectivity (which is not itself given by perception)[4] is an indication of an independent source of the percepts, and yet since the independently produced object is perceived by me, this independent source is somehow in me. My containing two grades of mind is no cumbersome idea for I am nothing; it is simply my being conscious of certain things as objective while they are really not so to another self in me which views them as imagined. A physical analogy of observing things from different points with different instruments will certainly confuse the matter which can be best understood through a direct experience of what goes on inside one's self. Analogy of the dream or illusion will help one to imagine the matter, but for understanding and belief in it one should look into one's self and do a bit of 'phenomenological research' known by old philosophers as meditation and self-searching.

To explain the laws of matter in terms of rules used by the universal self in imaging forth objects is no great matter when once the idea of this self is grasped. That the laws of the material world are not *a priori* necessities but may change and that they are like rules of a game of chess leaving very large scope for the players to choose their moves freely are now being recognized by scientists and logicians. This only shows that an epistemological enquiry, such as scientists and philosophers undertake, leads them to a consciousness of the higher self and the illusory objectivity of matter and its laws. However, such a clear vision has now exposed the bogy of mechanism and no incompatibility is now seen between the freedom of the self (ordinary one) and the so-called necessity in the world. This necessity is but the necessity of rules of the game to the universal self that plays through the ordinary selves whose freedom is therefore real in the sense that it is not barred by any necessity in the outward world (though, as we have seen before, it is unreal in the sense that it is prompted from behind).

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[4] Whether the object of perception is independent of the perception or not cannot be decided by perception itself, which cannot go beyond the perceived object. A realistic intuition is there and this has its origin in some higher knowledge.

(iii) To the third question, why the universal self has pure inventions as images while the lower (conscious) self in imagination largely imitates its perceptual experience, our answer is that the lower self is like the higher only in its capacity to image forth, the content of imagination may be anything. The origin of a particular image cannot be traced without falling into an infinite regress. In so tracing we mistakingly apply the principle of causality to them which only regulates the order of perceptions of the particulars, not their production or origin. This origin is the freely creative subject that creates the causal laws also along with the particular objects. From a particular flower to this particular world everything is ultimately arbitrary, coming out of nothing just as a particular word or action comes out of me if I am asked to speak or do anything I please. The ultimate mystery of the particular has to be accepted. There may be other words and other modes of being in future, who knows ?

(iv) As to the fourth question, why this universal self at all images forth and thus shoots forth the buds of matter that flower in the lower self, the only answer would be that this higher self is a subject and to realize subjectivity it projects objects and beguiles itself with these. But why is it a subject at all ? Perhaps there is a subject-objectless transcendental self that breaks up into subjective and objective poles, as the mystics say, but this is pure speculation for us at this stage of our research and we must stop with the ultimateness of the higher self and its activity of pure and free imaging, which implies the ultimateness of particular existence of matter and its laws.

Conclusions

The broad philosophical conclusions that emerge from this essay are the following :

(i) The physical substance has been abandoned by physical science and a mental substance by psychology. They are satisfied with the phenomena.

(ii) They have given up the idea of causality in the sense of productivity or efficiency and, so, given up causal explanation and are satisfied with descriptive ones. Causality in the sense of *necessary* connection or strict determination is also abandoned by modern physics leading to the recognition of descriptive laws of phenomena as fundamentally of a statistical nature.

(iii) These two points lead naturally to the view that it is not *matter* that *causes* the phenomena in strict mechanical order but it is some self that freely *images* them *forth* adopting some rules of recurrence for the sake of sport which, though at bottom an expression of freedom, yet needs some rules to distinguish it from utter chaos.

(iv) This self that projects the world of the phenomena is implicit in our selves (or minds regarded not as mental substances but as subjects), which are its limited modes and which transcend themselves (i.e. their limits) in a successful search after truth, beauty and goodness, and realize their essential identity with the Universal Self, and so enjoy real freedom and bliss. The individual mind is the result of a free act of self-limitation on the part of the Universal Self for the sake of variety and sport and the fact of self-transcendence on the part of the former shows the power of the latter to come back to its own from its temporary self-sought lapse into the individual mode.

(v) Whatever might be the details of this spiritual science, this seems certain that the natural sciences, though they cannot, and as such need not, *prove* the idealistic conclusions, yet are not at all incompatible with the latter. Rather with progress of natural science, such conclusions become more and more plausible.

(vi) The rift between science and idealism is only apparent ; it appears because science is not yet perfect and quite free of the influence of commonsense materialism from which it has sprung. The more science perfects itself and reveals reality the nearer will it come in its general outlook and spirit to the basic tenets of the perennial philosophy.

The Idea of Creation 24

The idea of creation implies that the creator must be absolutely responsible for the created and must absolutely know it. A potter does not create a pot, he only fashions it out of a substance, clay, which he neither creates nor knows thoroughly. Similarly a chemist does not create water out of hydrogen and oxygen when he produces some in the laboratory by the chemical action of the two gases. Nor do the gases create water, nor fire heat and smoke; they only cause their products, that is, they are antecedent occurrences in the succession of phenomena which succession follows some order, causal law. They have no control over the course of phenomena, they themselves being blindly and mechanically driven by law. Again, an architect's plan or idea incorporated in a building does not create the latter nor does the purpose for which the building is built. The purpose, like the plan or idea, is a psychological antecedent occurrence or cause of the building. So that causation in none of its forms, material, efficient, formal or final, is creation.

But, then, is creation an empty idea having no concrete illustration or instance to warrant it, a mere abstraction? It is not. For we have instances of it in our imaging and dreaming. We create our images and dream-objects. Though I may not be very much conscious of my imaging forth every detail of my images formed in imagination and, certainly, I am not conscious of my projecting the dream-objects, I do own them as mine own creations. And I know every bit of them such that I cannot sensibly say that there were parts in them which I overlooked. What I did not see in my imagination and dreams did not exist. Now I create these objects out of my 'mind', so I say. But what is this mind? Do I know it as an empirical object? No, it is simply my self or consciousness that knows the empirical objects and can project imaginary ones. It is not any substance, either physical, vital, psychological or spiritual (whatever the last may mean), for a substance implies properties inhering to it and appearing as phenomena under space,[1] time, quantity, causality, and other categories of empirical knowledge, and since these presuppose consciousness which is their ground and knower, they cannot determine it.[2] So the mind cannot be conceived as a thing or confused with mental states. Rather it may be realized as a subject of knowledge of empirical objects and as a creator or projector of the images in imagination and dreams. It may be spoken of in such negative terms as no-thing, no-cause, infinite and timeless (eternal). We have seen how it is a no-thing, and since only a thing can be a cause, it is no cause but a creator. It is infinite in the sense that it is beyond the category of space but not in the sense that nothing other than this stands over against it to limit it. The dream or phantasy world that it creates and faces cannot limit it as the latter is created by the former and known as unreal, also as an expression of the former's exuberance. The separate reality that these projected worlds have are given to them by the mind, which in various degrees of self-consciousness (from full self-consciousness as in the case of deliberately fancied projections to unself-consciousness as in dream projections) enjoys these creations. The empirical world of waking consciousness, however, seems to limit the mind that does not know this world as its creation like the dream-world, but rather knows it as an object standing over against it with a separate rival reality, so that the individual mind is infinite with respect to its phantasy world but limited with respect to the world of waking consciousness. Then the individual mind is eternal or timeless because it is beyond the category of time which presupposes it and also because it knows the temporal succession of phenomena which involves its being simultaneous with every phenomenon in the temporal series. While the sense-organs and the mental states or processes of sensation, recognition, association and conceptualization (i.e., synthesis of the sensuous manifold under some concept) are in time and so the cognitive processes associated with knowing are temporal, the knowing consciousness itself is timeless. But then this consciousness is limited by the psycho-physical adjuncts which it knows, as otherwise it would have known everything at the same time.

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[1] The psychological and spiritual phenomena do not appear under this category, but they do under time and other categories.

So the individual mind is no-thing and no-cause. It is a creator that creates or images forth out of nothing. Causation is change from something or for something, and since change from no-thing or for no-thing is meaningless, the mind cannot be a cause. It is above space and time and all empirical psycho-physical processes associated with knowledge and all the empirical objects known. The creator individual mind or self is not limited by the dreamworld which is freely created for self-beguilement and play, but it is limited by the empirical world and the psycho-physical processes it knows as objects confronting it as a rival reality. The individual mind does not know the empirical world, both internal and external, as its own creation. But this leads to certain philosophical difficulties. For, the problem arises as to how an alien or independent reality is known by the individual mind. Some think that this reality imprints itself or casts reflections on the mind. But then the mind or consciousness that knows the unconscious reality has to be conceived as of the nature of this reality. This would be self-contradictory. If to avoid this contradiction we conceive the mind as an unconscious passive receptor of reflections or impressions of the material substance, then knowing cannot be explained. For, reflections on a mirror or impressions on a slate do not constitute knowledge but are themselves known as objects. Any empirical physiological explanation of knowledge is no explanation but begging the question, for these processes such as nerve stimulation or movement of brain-cells are themselves knowable. So is any supposed explanation of knowledge in terms of psychological processes such as sensation, recognition, association, synthesis, etc. which only describe the concomitants of knowledge and are themselves known by internal perception or introspection. So the hypothesis of an independent reality as a psychological substance (i.e. as made of sensations, thoughts, etc.) is also untenable.

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[2] Categorized phenomena cannot be the properties of consciousness which is the ground of the categories, for the relation between ground and consequence is quite different from that between substance and properties.

Thus the empirical world, including the internal psychological states and physiological processes, cannot be regarded as an alien reality to mind if knowledge of it, which is a fundamental fact, is to be explained. Knowledge cannot be explained in any known terms without begging the question and to explain it in unknown terms is absurd. Thus there is no other way out for us than to treat the empirical reality as not alien or independent with respect to the mind but somehow grounded on the latter. But the individual mind does not know it to be so grounded, rather it knows it (empirical reality) as the other. What to do about it? Certainly there is no other way but to question the validity or ultimateness of this 'knowing as the other', and so of the individuality of the individual mind. We may ask : Is this sense of an independent reality facing us ultimate and unsublatable and is this sense of individuality similarly absolute? The two questions are correlative. For, if I can possibly know the empirical world as my creation, I cannot remain this little individual because the world thus known as my creation is really the integrated sum of all the actual and possible perceptions of all individual minds. It is not known as my private or exclusive one.

Now to the question of the independence of the empirically known world: Can it be like the independence of the dream-objects, one that is bestowed and can be withdrawn along with the contents of the dreams that appears to be the other? Can the individual mind rise to a higher level of awareness from where the empirical world with its independence appears to be a dream? We can at least imagine that level which gives it some *prima facie* plausibility. But what is plausible may not be true. We have to verify the plausible, or confirm the hypothetical (in this case) by means of an experience of a higher awareness that regards the empirical one as a self-adopted one and so the empirical world as created just as we ordinarily regard our dreams.

This metaphysically crucial experience is claimed to have been undergone by some mystics. We cannot downright reject their testimony, particularly in the face of such supernatural powers shown by them as prophesying and miracle-working. Only a creator can have foreknowledge of his creation and only he can work miracles. It would be sheer dogmatism to disbelieve the records of such activities. Even in our age of reason there have been such instances of supernatural power and modern researches in parapsychology prove their possibility beyond doubt. Now such a possibility implies the possibility of one's attaining a higher level of consciousness which may be called creative and omniscient. Since this higher consciousness transcends time, which is a creation of it, it creates in no time and so knows its creation in one sweep,—past, present and future—in an eternal timeless now. The supernatural powers exhibited by the mystics give us a faith that such an ideal is not an impossible one. This absolutely creative and omniscient consciousness is the ideal limit to such superhuman powers and is extrapolated from them. But though reached through these they are logically prior to these, that is, the higher order consciousness is the presupposition of these approaches to it and of the ordinary mode of consciousness that treats the world as an independent reality.

The transcension of the ordinary consciousness involves transcension of individuality. For, as noted before, the world that appears to be created in the higher consciousness is but an integration of all the world perspectives of individual minds. So this higher consciousness is a collective or universal one. This is also partly verified in some mystics by such powers as those of thought-reading, thought-transference and hypnotism.

This universal mode of consciousness is approached, though distantly, by us in our cognitive, aesthetic and ethical attitudes. We are more or less impersonal and disinterested when we know something, appreciate beauty, or perform some good act. It is when we are in our pragmatic mode that we are our egos, we treat the world as our environment to be exploited for our physical well-being. This bio-physical aspect of our nature vitiates our cognitive, aesthetic and ethical activities by mixing with them self-interest, and thus we have such knowledge as seeks to be practical, such beauty as is pleasing and useful, and such virtue as enhances our personal gain. However, we do have glimpses of pure knowledge, beauty and truth behind their adulterated forms, and this proves the reality of a universal consciousness or self behind its individual and fragmentary forms.

Now this higher consciousness may be regarded as the foundation or essence of the ordinary one. So this creative, timeless, omniscient and universal consciousness may be treated as our real consciousness while our ordinary one as its self-deluded mode just as the dream-consciousness is regarded as the self-deluded mode of the latter. This means that there is really one creator who creates by projecting images. This creator is consciousness which, not being an empirical object but a ground of all objects, is not to be numerically quantified as the latter are, but must be treated as a logical identity of type. In this sense it is one. It is one in another sense also. The world perspectives of all individuals show a continuity and similarity of content and also an identity of design. These imply unity in the creative consciousness that creates the world, which consciousness thus is not an aggregate or plurality of any individual creative consciousness, each being supposed to create a world of its own, but a higher unified whole that transcends, while including, the individual consciousness as instances of its deluded mode. It is thus one appearing as many or one in many. The creator self is thus the inner self of all individual selves which are held together and controlled by it. It is the real self that appears as many individual ones, each with its psycho-physical adjuncts, and so with separate location, world perspective, thoughts, feelings and doings.

So there is but one creator, our real Self or Consciousness. We as individual selves, can also create, our creations being dreams and phantasies. But, as noted before, we are not always quite aware how certain images are formed though we do not disown them for that reason as our creation. Thus we are surprised how we created certain queer dream-objects, suffused with strange feelings; and the poets also ascribe some of their deepest expressions to 'inspiration', regarding them as apparently unrelated to their conscious will and thought. Hence dreams and phantasies are to be ultimately accounted for with reference to our higher self, the one creator. If we realize the former in us then we can fully explain the latter, as fully as we do our self-consciously projected objects of imagination. And if we realize this higher self we can also fully explain this empirical world. This explanation, it may be noted, is to be done in terms of the playful will of the creator. We, by realizing it, shall be simply aware of this creative will. The way to realize this higher consciousness and will is through culture of the mind which involves, above all, detachment and meditation.

Our search for a true idea of creation has led us to this idea of cosmic creation and to one cosmic creator who creates by projecting objects in imagination and dream out of exuberance for the sake of self-beguilement. It takes, in a self-deluded mood, these objects for reality and then it appears to be an individual consciousness in which form it creates individual worlds of fancy and dreams to delight in them. Imaginary projection (*māyā*), playfulness (*līlā*) and aesthetic delight (*rasa*) are then the basic ideas behind creation, which is not to be confused with any serious job of making or effecting in which the maker or effector is on the same plane of reality as his objects made or effected. The latter are not completely derived from and known and controlled by the former and there is no element of play and aesthetic delight in this activity. Artistic creation is real creation in so far as it involves imagination or intuition, called internal expression. It is mere making in so far as it imitates an idea or an original idea by giving it naturalistic expression through some medium. To the extent an artist is truly creative he is *like* the universal creator, and the contemplative joy that he gets out of his activity and also that the beholders of his art get out of it through their re-creation of this activity in imagination is akin to the original joy of creation experienced by the cosmic creator. Thus the aesthetic delight is called *Brahmāsvādasahodara* (a twin of the delight of Brahma, the cosmic creator) in Indian aesthetics. Artistic activity is regarded as *akin* to the cosmic creative activity and not the *same as* that for the obvious reason that the artist creates out of his individual consciousness while the cosmic creator does out of the universal and foundational one. But as noted before, the artist also attains some universality and much of his imagination is unself-conscious, controlled by some higher consciousness and so ascribed to inspiration. So even in artistic activity cosmic creativity has its direct share which of course is ultimately the basis of all creativity and all making.

The Idea of Freedom

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I am essentially free; for, all necessity applies to objects of my knowledge, to my individual ego, intelligence, mind, life, body, and the perceptual world about me. If I can free myself from my not-Self, the world of objects, that is to say, if I can know necessity-bound objects as objects of knowledge distinct from my Self as the knowing subject, I can be free. The consciousness of necessity in the not-Self is freedom of the Self, for it is only by contrasting its own state with that of the not-Self can the Self really appreciate its freedom.

And the Self can know its objects as distinct from itself as subject precisely because there is necessity in the objects. If there were no law operating in the objective world of ego, intelligence, mind, body and the material universe, there would be no knowledge of it but merely a bare awareness of it. In such a bare awareness of haphazard appearances the subject cannot distinguish itself from the object with which it tends to confuse itself. The necessary principles ruling the world of appearances (in the form of categories, concepts or formulas) are also the principles of objectivity. The sciences discover these principles, principles of sociology, psychology, biology and physical sciences; and so far as the sciences succeed in discovering these principles they define objective fields of study. The more the sciences are perfect the more is the scientist conscious of his knowing 'self' as distinct from the object of knowledge, and so, distinct from the necessity that operates in the latter. The successive grades of knowledge of necessity in the objects of knowledge signify successive grades of awareness of freedom of the 'self' that knows.

But the sciences are not perfect as yet. They have discovered necessary laws in the spheres of matter, body, mind, intelligence and ego in the order of decreasing perfection. This corresponds with a decreasing order in the consciousness of freedom as we pass from contemplation of matter to the ego. In so far as we fail to know the necessary laws ruling the ego, we confuse our Self with the ego, and so, suffer the necessity which belongs really to the latter and not to the former. The necessity ruling the ego can be known by researches in social sciences which, however, is partly dependent on the psychological, biological and physical sciences. The ego-sense is no longer confused with the knowing 'self' when we know the ego as an object, just as the mental joys and sorrows are not considered as pertaining to my 'self' when I know my mental states as objects. The primitive man, like a child, considered even the natural objects about him as autonomous agents because he could not discover any mechanism in Nature; and he would have confused Nature with his own 'self' had the former not openly run counter to his egotistic wishes. If natural appearances followed our wishes, we would have believed them to be but extensions of our ego (and so, of our Self, the ego being confused with the Self at this state of unself-consciousness). Such extreme confusions occur in certain pathological conditions of the mind. Generally, in a normal mind of our age, the ego is confused with the Self for, we do now know fully this individual acting and enjoying 'self'. which is the ego. The knowing 'self' (which is *the* Self) transcends this ego, though it is reflected on the latter. That such is the case can be understood only by a realization of the knowing 'self', this subject in all knowledge, as it is self-revealed and revealing objects including the ego. It cannot be known as an object, for, while knowing it as such one still has to be a subject; but it cannot be doubted, for, while doubting it one has to be a subject that doubts. This subject, this 'I' that knows and is at the back of all judgments, can only be asserted and be aware of. That it transcends the ego may at first be taken on trust from the mystics who have realized it. Later one may have a direct intuition of it if one so wishes and follows the directions of the mystics regarding this.

That there is a possible truth in the existence of a transcendental Self that is always the subject can be guessed from a certain experience, viz. that of illusion. When we perceive a snake in a rope we are conscious of the subject as distinct from the snake and as knowing the latter. But as soon as the illusion breaks we are conscious of the subject as a knowing 'self' independent of the object, for, now we can neither say that we knew the rope nor that we knew the snake (while the illusory perception lasted). We knew, but there was no object of our knowledge. Thus our attention is turned towards our knowing 'self' as revealing and self-revealed, i.e. as a self-subsistent subject, the Spirit. We disown a feeling of fear in the presence of the snake as not really felt but only suffered by accident and error and we are aware for a while of our knowing 'self'. Aesthetic illusion, in the form of aesthetic semblance and aesthetic sympathy, ends in making us more conscious of our Self. This is tragic catharsis which is but self awareness through suffering of pain not really mine.

The experience of illusion and the assertions of the mystics offer hints as to the existence of the transcendental Self beyond our ego with its intellectual, psychical and physical correlates. Our inherent and absolute love of freedom, which is an indirect proof of the possibility of freedom, leads us to realize this 'self' and this freedom co-natural with the Self. But to realize it we have to contemplate our ego and know the necessity ruling it. We have to study our active and enjoying ego through introspection. Further, we have to study the society which is indissolubly interrelated with the ego. Thus the individual ego can be completely known as an object apart from the subject when our knowledge of the social, biological, psychological and physical sciences are complete. Then can we know the necessity in the ego, and knowing this, can we be aware of the freedom of our 'self' that knows this necessity. Then we will not confuse our Self with the ego and will not illusorily feel the necessity that is in the ego as binding the Self. Thus the realization of the reality of the Self as the free subject of all knowledge of necessity-bound objects is also realization of absolute freedom.

But this freedom is realized in contemplation. It is achieved through dissociating the 'self' from the objects with which it is ignorantly confused. The 'self' so realized is the contemplative 'self', a mere witness of the play of Nature. It is not active, for contemplation is not activity but a spontaneity. The Self reveals objects. Intelligence is active in exploring truth, which when arrived at, is intuited by the 'self' that is the sole knower. Intelligence and other mental faculties and sense-organs act to remove the wrappings that veil an object. And these psychical and physical activities are themselves known by the 'self'. So, that knowing or contemplating is no activity in the proper sense. Yet it is no passivity, for, the 'self' is ever wakeful like a steady flame. In dreamless sleep, when all our psychical processes stop, the 'self' keeps its constant vigil, so that on waking we do not lose the continuity of our 'self' and we say 'I slept well'. Thus the 'self', though absolutely free, is neither active nor passive. We, however, wish to taste freedom as active agents. For this we have to act on Nature (including human nature), the object of our knowledge, knowing fully the necessity that operates in it. We can change Nature only by knowing and using the laws of Nature. Instead of magic we have to master science. But a mere knowledge of the means to change Nature will not give us active freedom; we must also know what to change. That is, we must have a notion of our ideal. Our politicians, physicists, psychologists and other expert scientists do great harm to society simply because they have mastered some means of changing Nature while lacking adequate knowledge of the end to be achieved. This end must be perfect freedom for all, which implies real happiness for all. And this can only be achieved through Self-knowledge, so that if we want to taste freedom in action we have to work for a change in the physical and human nature in the right direction, that which leads to conditions promoting Self-knowledge in men and women. In one word, we have to be humble servants of humanity and must possess two equipments: first, the knowledge of necessary laws working in Nature (including society, individual mind-body system, and the physical world); second, the knowledge of the end to be achieved by humanity. To change the world for mere material enjoyment to human beings is as demoniacal as to change it for their destruction. The materialistic teachings of social scientists and psychologists of today are scrappy and short sighted endeavours to improve the world. These ardent spirits are dark prophets who lead men into blind alleys and soon bring them against baffling confusion and chaos. Any interference with Nature without a thorough grasp of the end to be achieved is dangerous. Knowledge of Nature, that is, science, is a power which is forbidden by the religious teachers, precisely because such a power is not innocuous unless combined with a knowledge of what to do with it, that is, with Self-knowledge which is the same as God realization.

To attain true freedom in contemplation is therefore a prerequisite for attaining freedom in action, and only a liberated self, a *bodhisattva*, working for universal salvation can experience both these forms of freedom. It is obvious that such a worker can have no egotistic interest in his work; he does this in a spirit of detachment, not even out of any sentiment for humanity. He does this for he knows that his own 'self' is one with the universal Self, and it is a part of his loving duty to help people to discriminate the universal Self (in each human 'self') from its entanglements with Nature, from material chaos and mental effects. Such a social worker looks on his fellow-beings as his very own and finds in their liberation the perfect realization of his freedom. It is not for the sake of his ego that he works for humanity, it is for his own 'self' which is essentially the universal Self or Absolute Spirit. So, his work can be said to be strictly neither selfless nor selfish, neither altruistic, led by sentiments which bind the soul nor egotistic, led by infatuation which also binds the soul. Thus only can an enlightened social worker realize perfect and essential freedom through action which is ordinarily a fetter to the soul.

The freedom thus conceived is no abstraction and it does not involve world-forsaking or negation of life. One's individual freedom is organically related with the freedom of all; so the lover of freedom is no escapist or recluse. He does not covet material and mental pleasures, yet he enjoys matter and mind like the witness of a play. And he works for such improvements in matter and mind (i.e. physical and psychological developments) as may help man in his progress towards Self-realization. He works for the eradication of extreme poverty and class difference and their products, of mutual distrust and conflicts which are not congenial to spiritual progress. He endeavours to change the mind and the material environment of man only to help him in the path of freedom. And this universal freedom, when achieved, will not change men into dry ascetics but will make them happy and true enjoyers of the good things of Nature and life, of matter and mind. Their enjoyment of these objects will be free from infatuation that binds the soul to the objects and enslaves it, leading it to sorrow. This enjoyment will be full of lucidity and freedom that marks aesthetic delight; it will be a beatitude experienced by the wise witness of an intriguing game or an absorbing drama, the witness who, while appreciating all the variety of feelings, feels them not, for he *knows* them as mere waves of effects undulating his mind. A wise man knows his real Self as a free subject that *knows* its actions, feelings and thoughts, so that the latter are contemplatively enjoyed and not blindly indulged in. Therefore, they cannot bind him. He lives freely and enjoys freely the worldly goods; yet he, in one sense, lives not, nor enjoys anything, for he but contemplates his natural mind-body with the ego-sense living and enjoying. His real joy is in knowing, for his 'self' is essentially the subject that knows. And he enjoys absolute freedom while outwardly living the life of an ordinary man.

Indian Personalism

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Though almost all the diverse attitudes to the world and life, from stark materialism to abstract monistic idealism, are found in Indian philosophical literature and culture, yet it will be admitted on all hands that personalism rings the most dominant note there. We propose to give in brief the reasoning underlying this philosophical faith. However, reconstruction more than exposition is undertaken here. This may be interesting to the personalists of the West who will find here many common as well as strange features.

Our philosophical reasoning should start not with the consideration of phenomena and their relations (i.e., with science) but rather with an analysis of our perceptual knowledge (i.e., with epistemology) which is logically prior. So at one stroke we do away with scientism and all its barren materialistic consequences. If this is an egocentric move on our part, it is but a bad name and nothing wrong in itself; we may equally characterize the procedure of our opponents as objectocentric. Now when we analyse our perceptual knowledge, which yields us the world of science and commonsense, we find these results. (1) There are five external senses giving five kinds of sense-data. (2) There is a mind which controls these senses and organizes their reports into images or sense-impressions of physical objects which are complexes of sense-data of many kinds. This mind is naturally distinct from and above the senses yet is in contact with them and is modified along with them. (It is named "Sense-mind" to distinguish it from mind which is more or less equivalent to consciousness or spirit). It has its own modifications too, those associated with feelings and volitions. (3) These mental modifications, associated with external and internal experience, are temporal and themselves witnessed. We not only perceive objects, but we are aware of these states in us. Therefore, there must be a witnessing subject which is above time. In fact without an awareness and owning of the internal and external impressions by the witnessing subject, there is no knowledge and no judgment; we 'really' do not perceive, feel or will until and unless we 'know' that we do and make judgments like "I feel a pain", "I see the table" or "I will an action."

Now this witnessing subject is transcendental. This is inferred from the fact of our perceptual knowledge, both internal and external. This transcendental subject is further inferred from the following: We have a subconscious mind where reside the general concepts and laws of the perceptual world which are called up when we perceive something. There reside again the dispositions and instincts which come up to the upper level and are displayed when appropriate situations are presented, and there are stored up impressions in the form of memory which awake to consciousness when occasions call for them. Besides this subconscious state of the mind, there are the dream and unconscious states. In the unconscious states, as in a dreamless sleep or swoon, the mind must not be thought to be non-existing, for then it would not return to the conscious state with all the memories, dispositions, etc. Now these three states of the mind must have a witness to reveal them and know them as related states of the same mind. This witness must be above the mind (Sense-mind) it knows as an object and above the modifications it undergoes. This is the transcendental subject. Again, the transcendental subject may be inferred from the fact of perceptual knowledge which is essentially objective. We know that our knowledge of objects is not subjective for otherwise impersonal intercourse and our social life which depends on it would be impossible. But this objectivity of our knowledge implies the independent existence of the objects apart form our knowing them; knowing only reveals them. This assertion of the objects being there apart form their actual perception by the (sense) mind cannot be made by this mind itself; it means awareness of them by a transcendental mind or subject which really guarantees to us the validity of our perceptual knowledge. And since subject is the ground of universality of knowledge got by different individual minds, it is the same in all minds, one transcendental and universal consciousness behind the individual and empirical (sense) minds.

Now that the one universal transcendental subject is established as the real subject of all our knowledge, we have to determine its other attributes and its relation to the individual subjects. The transcendental subject cannot be regarded as a mere subject of awareness. Since the objects, namely, the minds and their modifications, the physical bodies and the mental affections and connotations, cannot be conceived to be self-existent but only contingent,—they appear, change, and disappear—therefore, they must have a self-existent ground. Only the ranscendental subject cannot be contingent, for it is the witness of all ontingent objects. So this subject must be reality itself, the ground of ll contingent and shadowy realities or appearances. Now how may this ground be conceived? It cannot be the *cause* of the objects, for a cause is co-ordinate with the object and is as contingent as the latter; and it must be an effect itself. Again, the concept of cause implies some necessity in the object causing the effect and also transformation of it. The ultimate ground or reality of the contingent objects and their witnessing subject cannot be so conceived, for there cannot be a higher power to control and compel the ultimate reality and, again, the subject of awareness cannot change during awareness into the object. So that we have to give up the mechanomorphic analogy and see if the anthropomorphic one better serves our purpose.

Now what if this transcendental subject and ultimate reality be conceived as a self that freely projects the objects? We have such an experience in our imagination and dream where we freely project (i.e., create, not cause) objects that depend on us while we remain intact. This transcendental subject is then the transcendental self with the power of free projection or creation of objects which have a contingent being. But now the question arises, what is the purpose of this projection and what is the relation of this Self to our individual selves? Again the answer might be given after an analogy with what happens in one's empirical self. Aesthetic enjoyment may be the sole purpose; creativity and exercise of imagination can well be an end in itself. And the individual selves are but the self-deluded or freely-lapsed conditions of the Self (in various degrees) like the subjects in dream or fantasy that take the objects in the shadow world for reality. Thus in our ordinary realistic attitude the Self in us is more or less completely lapsed while in the attitude of transcendental idealism, when we are aware of the empirical reality of the perceptual objects and also of their being ultimately ideal, the Self is only partially lapsed. The Self in both these states enjoys the experiences aesthetically just as we are said to be enjoying our dreams as well as imaginative and artistic activities. It is not true that we enjoy only pleasurable dreams and not the bad ones just as it is false that we suffer during tragic plays. Experiences, both pleasurable and painful, in dreams, fantasies and art, are enjoyed though the enjoyment of painful experiences is less obvious and more subtle. Experience is sought in these various conditions for its own sake and enjoyed. Analogically we may say that the transcendental Self enjoys the experiences of the individual selves in the manner the latter enjoy their dream and imaginative experiences. This may be somewhat directly verified by a little self-analysis for the transcendental Self is after all in us. We do take an aesthetic interest in life and the world in our most lucid state of the mind which should be regarded as more natural state of our souls though less frequent. And in those moments we take equal delight in both our so-called joys and sorrows and bless both friends and foes. Our business in life, as visualized by many a poet and prophet in all ages and countries, is the cultivation of this detached and contemplative attitude and to reach progressively the ideal state of lucidity and aesthetic delight. "Ripeness is all." To see the world as a stage where men play their parts or as a dream is the height of wisdom. We may interpret this ideal as progressive realization of the transcendental Self in our individual selves, as coming back, less or more, of this Self from its lapsed state to Self-consciousness. Suffering is conditioned by blindness and passivity. · And as the transcendental Self is never absolutely lapsed, we do have some spontaneity and contemplative attitude towards life in the midst of suffering, that is, we objectify our feeling, express it in some manner, at least to ourselves or to an imaginary audience, and escape it to some extent. And so far as we do not escape it in this manner and really suffer, the transcendental Self in us still enjoys it in the sense that it becomes later an object of contemplation, an intense experience. Thus transcendence of suffering does take place, whether during suffering or after it, and, so, the transcendental Self cannot be denied.

The Self is thus not an abstract substance. It is neither pure subject-objectless consciousness nor pure being as some extreme monists conceive it to be. It is a Person with a concrete subject-object polarized consciousness, with power to create and with aesthetic interest and joy. It is infinite because there is nothing outside it to limit it, and it is eternal because nothing can precede or survive it. Again, this Person is Beauty, Truth and Goodness in one, in the sense that it is the ground of these cognate values which are realized when one realizes in oneself this Self. For beauty is realized when one experiences an object for its own sake, as a mere creation or existent, without being involved in it in a pragmatic-egotistic manner; that is, when one transcends one's individual, and worldly self and identifies it more or less with the Self in him. To experience the truth of things, that is, their essential nature, we have to recognize them as projected by the Self in us for its aesthetic enjoyment. "Beauty is truth, truth beauty." So that the ideal of truth is the same as realization of the Self and its vision of things. Perfect goodness consists in disinterested action which implies detachment and transcension of the individual self or ego. This means, again, realization of the Self in us.

Indian personalism, which visualizes the ultimate Reality as a Supreme Person, draws much from our experience of dream, imagination, and artistic production and enjoyment in order to rationalize this faith. There are many loopholes and loose ends in any rational philosophical system and what one can claim for one's particular system is only its relatively small number of free assumptions and gaps in reasoning and better plausibility. Such a right sort of claim is made for the philosophy briefly sketched here.

Keats and Indian Ideal of Life Poetry 27

It is an interesting study to compare the ideal of life and poetry that Keats held with that which we find in Indian tradition. We see on reading the letters of this young poet that he was led by his own experience and reflection to a very definite and original notion of the problem of evil and suffering and of the function of poetic imagination. These two notions may be better understood in the light of corresponding ones in Indian thought.

The Indian attitude towards life is basically pessimistic. Suffering is said to be the essence of life and the only way out is salvation through renunciation. The schools of philosophy, the Buddhist and the Jaina, the Sāṅkhya, the Nyāya and the Vedānta, all trace our suffering to our attachment to worldly things or to our passionate nature, and enjoin us to overcome this weakness by the practice of detachment. When the Vedic sages declare that the world arises out of the blissful Brahman, then they speak of bliss not in the world and in life as they actually appear to us but in a realm behind them. All evil and pain is due to our error of seeing things; it is an illusion, the veil of *māyā*, caused by our own passionate and egotistic nature that must suffer in a world which is a sportive creation (*līlā*) of Brahman and is indifferent to man. The worldly happiness of man is not the purpose of creation. Man must seek not to improve the world but to alter his own nature so as to get real happiness. This happiness lies in the realization of one's true self, which is one with Brahman itself and so is essentially blissful. The other philosophies of India mentioned above hold that the spirit in man is quiescent after death, with neither happiness nor suffering. But Vedānta, which has most influence over the Indian mind, speaks of a transcendental happiness to be attained in liberation from the bondage of birth and death or of phenomenal existence. This happiness (according to Vedānta) or this cessation of suffering (according to the other schools) may be experienced even in this life if we control our ordinary mind and body sufficiently. One may have what the Vedānta calls a liberation while living (*jīvanmukti*), and one is then a "living corpse", being dead to pleasure and pain of life and having no interest in anything. He sees everything as a shadow-show or dream which he appreciates for its inventive power and variety. According to the Vedānta, he identifies himself with the cosmic spirit that projects the dreamworld and enjoys it as a magical performance.

Now, Keats had no illusion about the world and human life which he knew to be full of evil and suffering. He sees the eternal fierce destruction that goes on on land and in the sea—the struggle for existence. "The hawk would lose his breakfast of robins and the robin his of worms. . . . The greater part of men make their way with the same instinctiveness, the same unwandering eye from their purposes, the same animal eagerness as the hawk."[1] "Man is originally 'a poor forked creature' subject to the same mischances as the beasts of the forest, destined to hardships and disquietude of some kind or other."[2] Keats read Robertson's American history and Voltaire's *Siécle de Louis XIV* and concluded that the civilized man is no less miserable than is the simple uncivilized one, and though he could imagine some happiness brought to man by "the persevering endeavours of a seldom appearing Socrates," this must end in death, and "who could in such a case bear with death?" Keats sees that the very elements of nature are against man. He writes, "I would reject a petrarchial coronation on account of my dying day and because women have cancers." He knows this world where "youth turns spectre-thing and dies," "where to think is to be full of sorrow and leaden-eyed despairs," and where "hungry generations" march on. Thus, Keats looked straight and clearly at the stark reality and saw the "giant agony of the world." He did not like to put any gloss over this sorry state of affairs. He was a bold realist and an uncompromising pessimist.

But he knew how to settle with this evil and suffering. He entertained no vain idea about improving things; but certainly he found a trick to escape from it into another world which resembled this miserable one in all particulars but which is all beauty and soft delight. This trick is what he called "negative capability." He meant by this a positive faculty of the mind, developed in some rare persons—such as Shakespeare, for instance—by virtue of which, one, negatively, does not make up one's mind about everything but enjoys being in "uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact or reason," and, positively, regards everything with a "sense of beauty" that overcomes every other consideration.[3] This sense of beauty transforms an ordinary perception, which may be painful, into an enjoyable experience through the intensity of perception and feeling. We might say that here an isolation of the particular object from others, and thus an enhanced or concentrated attention to it, invests a new quality in it. It sheds a new light upon it so that what was disagreeable becomes fascinating. Thus, while this negative capability prevents one, by its negative function, from falsifying the reality of pain by some dogma, clever theory or rationalization and lets one face evil and pain and be sick—for "knowledge is sorrow" and "sorrow is wisdom"[4]—it, through its positive function, makes the mind hold this very evil and pain with such intensity that they are transmuted into beauty. This vision of life is more valuable for Keats than is the ordinary one, and he regards it as true, thus defining truth in his way. "What imagination seizes as Beauty must be Truth—whether it existed before or not."[5] Keats thus faces evil and pain and yet sees nothing but beauty and joy. He declares to his beloved Fanny Brawne that he has "loved the principle of beauty in all things," and that this is his only achievement.

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[1] Letter to George and Georgiana Keats, March 19, 1819.

[2] *Loc. cit.*

[3] Letter to George and Georgiana Keats, Dec. 21, 1817.

But what is the source of this beauty and joy? It is surely the mind that is endowed with this negative capability by virtue of which it mercilessly subjects itself to life's hard realities instead of being shielded by any intellectual half-truth or blind faith in some ideal perfection. Keats holds that by this process of intense undergoing of suffering through the activity of one's heart one develops self-consciousness. The world is not so much a "vale of tears" as it is a "vale of soul-making," where souls emerge out of intelligences by pain through the medium of the heart.[6] One is an intelligence unaware of any self-identity till one is schooled by the sufferings of the world. I think Keats was driving towards the view that one achieves self-consciousness as one faces hard realities squarely, for they have a greater demand over his attention and imagination; and this discovery of the self together with the experience of its energy or power is what more that neutralizes the disagreeableness in the realities confronted. Thus, while one does not make evil less evil, in one sense one turns it into beauty, nevertheless—a paradox to be understood by one's own experience of the matter.

This way of dealing with evil and pain is not spoken of in Indian philosophy where, as we stated before, one is to deaden one's sensibilities. Keats does come near speaking of this kind of happiness in one letter[7] where he describes how "pleasure has no show of enticement and pain no unbearable frown"for him. "Neither poetry, nor ambition, nor love have any alertness of countenance as they pass by." But this is a passing mood induced by his bodily disorder. He did not think of cultivating this attitude of indifference. He speaks in the same letter of taking a detached view of things such that one may see and appreciate the energies displayed in animal and human activities rather than the ugly struggle for existence. "Though a quarrel in the streets is a thing to be hated, the energy displayed in them is fine." He calls this attitude poetic and considers it inferior to a philosophical attitude that makes for truth. "This is the very thing in which consists poetry, and, if so, it is not so fine a thing as philosophy—for the same reason that an eagle is not as fine as truth."

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[4] Letter to Reynolds, May 3, 1818.

[5] Letter to Baily, Nov. 22, 1817.

[6] Letter referred to above in ([1]).

But how could Keats hold a view that poetry does not give truth when he believes poetic imagination to yield beauty and truth? He speaks of his *Endymion* that, when he wrote it, "it was a regular stepping of Imagination toward Truth."[8] And we know his statement, "Imagination may be compared to Adam's dream —he awoke and found it truth."[9] It seems, therefore, that Keats did not mean by "poetry" in that passage real poetry which never gives untruth or false abstraction and so is not inferior to philosophy. He has in mind a kind of poetry that simplifies its task by ignoring the moral and intellectual elements in things contemplated, whereas real poetry takes care of them and yet goes beyond them by its "intensity" or "fine excess" that is creative of beauty and of a higher truth than intellectual philosophy can offer us. True poetry, for Keats, is the expression of the poet's successful confrontation with evil and pain, which are turned into beauty and joy by his intensity of feeling and his self-awareness that is involved in this activity.

If this is so, the answer to evil which Keats gives is different from the traditional Indian answer in this: while he thinks that one's imaginative activity, and the self-awareness which accompanies it, are the solvents of evil, the Indian philosophers consider one's self-surrender to the cosmic spirit to be the required solvent; this surrender or dissolution of the ego implies withdrawal of all ordinary sense and sensibilities and, as the Vedānta adds, identification of oneself with, and appreciation of, the cosmic creativity. While Keats concentrates on the individual consciousness and its intense absorption in objects that evaporates all disagreeableness in them, the Vedānta philosopher rests on the universal creative consciousness and our absorption in it.

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[7] Letter to George and Georgiana Keats, March 17, 1819.

[8] Letter to Taylor, Jan. 30, 1818.

But Keats is nearer the view of Indian aestheticians who define aesthetic delight (*rasa*) as arising out of one's intense absorption in some object, which activity is necessarily accompanied by, first, an impersonal aesthetic attitude to the object which is contemplated for its own sake, second, realization of one's own consciousness, and, third, intense delight of an extraordinary kind.[10] The Indian aesthetician makes it clear that the mind of the poet in its imaginative mood is not ordinary in so far as it is not affected naturalistically by the objects he contemplates; it is deindividualized or socialized and yet in so far as it is intensely absorbed in some object and variegated by emotions instead of being indifferent to them, it is not like the state of mind of a *yogī*. The objects and the associated emotions are contemplated in such a manner that the mind is self-conscious and collected, and enjoys both the unity and serenity of the self and the variety and movements of its sensuous and emotional modes. I think Keats would have admitted much of this account of the poetic mind. He would find in it his own requirements of "intensity" of perception and feeling and the realization of self-identity of the experiencing subject. Keats does not explicitly speak of one characteristic of the poetic mind brought out in Indian poetics, viz., the state of sympathy with other minds by virtue of which the poet can readily take an objective view of things instead of a narrowly subjective or idiosyncratic one. This makes for communicability of poetry. I think Keats would readily admit this, for he could not but believe in the universal appeal of his poetry which he considered to be the expression of truth. The poetic imagination is no less common a faculty in man than is the perceptual or the reasoning one. Keats held that "poetry should surprise us by fine excess and not by singularity— it should strike the reader as a wording of his own highest thoughts and appear almost a remembrance."[11] So he would appreciate the Indian conception of the poetic imagination which adds to his own characterization another aspect: the socialization or normalization of imagination. This means that, along with the feeling of

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9 Letter to Baily, Nov. 22, 1817.

10 See *Aesthetic Experience according to Abhinavagupta* by R. Gnoli (Rome, 1956), pp. 63, 99, 104.

This is an English translation of a portion of a work by Abhinavagupta, (10 C.A.D.).

11 Letter to Taylor, Feb. 27, 1818.

self-identity, the poet also feels some essential kinship with other minds. As he experiences evil and suffering and turns them into beauty and delight by his imagination, he becomes aware not only of his particular experiencing and imaginative self but also of his affinity with other selves in this poetic nature. For a poet does not create for his own enjoyment solely, he does it in order to communicate with others. Keats would have admitted this and, perhaps, would have reached such a view himself had he been spared by ill-health and death to pursue his thoughts on the subject further. Though he did not write poetry for public fame, he would certainly not write and publish for his own pleasure. Describing a fine northern scene in a letter, he goes on to say that he would learn poetry there and would add to the "mass of beauty he harvested from those grand materials" and "put into etherial existence for the relish of one's fellows."[12] So that he could not but see that poetic imagination involves an awareness of the identity of the poet's self with others in some respect besides an awareness of his own self-identity, and that the poetic enjoyment includes a joy derived from this latter awareness by the side of the joy from the former.

We may conclude this study by observing that Keats admitted evil and pain, like the Indian philosopher, as a brute fact, but he did not find a solution of it in terms of identification of oneself with the Absolute and enjoyment of the world as a magical show; he found an aesthetic answer to it, and in this he was allied to the Indian aestheticians whose idea of artistic imagination and enjoyment was not very far from Keat's own.

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[12] Letter to Thomas Keats, June 26, 1818.

Shakespeare and The Indian Ideal of Life 28

Shakespeare was a Renaissance dramatist, who, above all, had to entertain the Elizabethan audience that loved life with its rich burden of passion and pain, hopes and fears, a life which is essentially tragic. He saw and delineated (in his best plays — the tragedies) the sensuous aspect of life—the quick consuming love of Romeo, the blind and jealous passion of Othelo, the devastating ambition of Macbeth, the pure purposeless malignity of Iago, the maddening selfishness of King Lear's two daughters and the sadism of Richard III. He is a poet of the instinctive or the passionate basical nature of man, the poet of the psycho-physical human plane, not even of the intellectual, and certainly not of the moral and spiritual planes. He shows man desiring and suffering, not thinking or spiritually contemplating. The thinking of Hamlet is but the passionate outbursts of a perplexed and suffering soul, and the only intelligent being in Shakespeare's plays seems to be Iago; yet he does not know his own destructive nature and its nemesis, and so is a fool too.

Yet Shakespeare did not exalt like Marlow, the passionate nature of man. The world he presents us is a moral world though peopled by either immoral or amoral characters. For this world, we find, trembles and threatens to break into pieces while the tragic characters display their dominating passion or vice, but it regains its order in the end ; the vice is proved vicious, the good proved good. Shakespeare did not confuse the moral values, we can clearly see him discriminating between the good and the bad and doing apt poetic justice. Though the virtue that is in the general atmosphere of the play seems to be momentarily eclipsed by the thick fury of passions displayed by the chief characters, it reappears brilliant from pain, washed by blood and tears. We see this effect and experience an exquisite calm when the curtain falls finally in a Shakespeare-tragedy. We return home with much knowledge of the 'animal nature' of man, no doubt, but also with an assured faith in a moral order that censors the animal in man.

And so we come to ask what exactly does Shakespeare teach us through his plays that are obviously full of pain and confusion of passions (we refer specially to his tragedies for in them he has studied man deeply and most seriously). Shakespeare teaches us that desire is the source of all our suffering, the root of all unrest. Tragedy springs, in life, and, so in drama, from the desiring self of man, the instinctive drives of the ego. And Shakespeare, besides demonstrating this truth in his tragedies (without stating it like a moral philosopher), has let fall remarks here and there in the mouths of some characters which hint the same truth. Hamlet, himself suffering from the perplexity of contending passions, praises Horatio for his mastering of passions. He speaks of Horatio :—

"As one, in suffering, all that suffers nothing;
A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast taken with equal thanks; and blessed are those
Whose blood and judgement are so well commingled
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she pleases. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.
(Act III, Sc. 3)

Horatio is not moral in the ordinary sense of the term but he is amoral in the sense that he is beyond good and evil. He does not choose between passions but is above all passions, a self-poised soul. Shakespeare does not present Horatio as a typical moral character ; Horatio seldom advises Hamlet to do this or that ; rather, he, through his silence and, sometimes, very short remarks, discourages Hamlet's passionate moods. Once he remarks critically to Hamlet's effusions, "You might have rhymed" (Act III, Sc. 2). Once he said, "Be ruled" (Act I, Sc. 4) ; on another occasion, "Good my lord, be quiet." (Act V, Sc I). For Horatio every passion is bad, goodness consists in transcending one's affective nature and living a composed life of the rational spirit. Feelings should be ruled by good sense (judgment) and actions would issue not from irrational gusts of passion ('blood') but from a detached spirit that regards everything in the light of universal good, not personal. That is, of course, the highest morality as it is ordinarily conceived. Horatio may be called moral from an absolute moral point of view which is adopted in Hindu ethics. For he is one who follows the advice which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives to Arjuna, to live and act considering victory and defeat, joy and sorrow, as one.

Shakespeare views in his tragedies the clash of passions and shows the pitiable plight to which passions lead man, how they bring discord in his world and disintegrate it. Though the moral order asserts itself in the end, the world-order (e.g. the world of Othello, Hamlet and Lear) crumbles. In one of his last romantic plays, Tempest, Shakespeare seems to give a more direct expression to his philosophy of life. Prospero has forsaken the world and his position in it because he finds them not worth his while; there is too much of scramble and narrowness in men. He views life as a veil of '*Māyā*' and says,

"We are such stuff as dreams are made of
And our little life is rounded off with a sleep."

Yet his world-weariness is no lasting for it is not a true and ultimate attitude to life. He finds the island 'bare' and breaking his magic-wand, returns to his world to live among his own people. So that, he is now neither infatuated nor dejected by life, which he accepts with inward detachment. He will now live in the world like King Janaka of Mithilā, enjoying as a witness of everything and never getting entangled in anything. In this lies ultimate wisdom and true happiness. Says *Gītā* (11, 64) : "He is happy who, having been free alike from infatuation and dejection and having controlled his senses, enjoys through these senses the worldly goods." The Western critics of Shakespeare point out that Prospero, by deciding to return to his people, revokes his Stoical outlook, and, so, there is a contradiction in his character. They point out that Shakespeare himself had a weakness for worldly life ; he returned to Stratford after leaving his profession and bought property there to live as a "gentleman". So, Shakespeare (the critics say) could not conceive of the quiet Stoical satisfaction that prospero might get from his resigned life in the bare island. But these critics have not a deeper and larger view of life, which, we have seen, teaches us to live amongst our people without either infatuation or disgust for the world, in a spirit of detachment. The secret of selfless action as taught by *Gītā* is the root of a correct philosophy of life and we believe Shakespeare, the great human poet, knew this secret through his insight. Neither Stoicism nor hedonism but a higher and more comprehensive philosophy of life is taught by Hindu ethics. Tagore has taught this philosophy; and Shakespeare too teaches this, though very indirectly, quite unobtrusively like a true poet that he was.

13.9.42

How sorrowful it is that people worships Devi Saraswati only seeking to get into the chamber of Devi Lakshmi. I can never think so, Devi Saraswati is my ever worshipped Deity and I am Her priest and devotee.

Devi Saraswati my goddess! be kind to give me a little place at your lotus-feet. I care not for money or status. I only pray for your kindness— give me knowledge and only that insight and inspiration that knowledge brings. O' Goddess! draw me towards your pure bliss away away from all material temptations. Your kind smile be my guardian, Angel ! put your lotus-feet upon my soul O' Devi Saraswati ! Give me flood of devotional love for you, more and more— so that knowledge enormous makes a superb self of me. I pray for nothing more O'Goddess of learning— my ever worshipped Deity....

—Dr. Pravas Jivan Chaudhury

(A Page from his personal diary)

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About the Author

Born on March 13, 1916 at Serampore (West Bengal) of a Bengali Hindu Barendra Brahmin family, Dr. Chaudhury was the eldest son of Dr. Makhan Lal Chaudhury and Sm. Prabhabati Devi of Santragachhi (Howrah). His ancestors of the maternal side—the Bhattacharya family, were reputed Sanskrit Scholars.

After his brilliant school and college education performed with scholarships and gold medals in Bareilly (U.P.), he received his M.Sc. degree in Physics in 1939 from Patna University. He took his M.A. degree in English from Calcutta University in 1942. He took a third Master's Degree in Philosophy with top-ranking list from the same university in 1944, where he also received his Doctorate Degree in 1952. Dr. Chaudhury's educational career was uniformly brilliant, his merit finding recognition through awards of numerous prizes and medals. He was awarded the Sir Asutosh Gold medal, the Griffith Prize, the Mowat medal and the Premchand Roychand Scholarship between 1946 and 1955 from Calcutta University.

Dr. Chaudhury started his teaching career as lecturer in English Literature at St. Anthony College in Shillong. Then he took an appointment at Moga College in Punjab in 1944. Later on he moved to Visva-Bharati University where he used to teach Philosophy, Physics and English Literature.

He joined the Presidency College, Calcutta in 1953. Dr. Chaudhury enjoyed a reputation both at home and abroad for his rich contributions to leading journals on Philosophy, Science and Aesthetics and also English Literature in India, Europe and America. By Virtue of his charming personality and intellectual achievements he won numerous friends and admirers both in India and outside. Professor Burtt of the Cornell University (U.S.A.) says about him—"We thought of him as one of the most promising philosophers, not just in India, but in the world, his contribution to philosophical thought bringing together in some measure basic Indian convictions with those enlarged by an understanding of philosophy of science in the West."

Dr. Werkmeister among other Western scholars looked upon him as a keen thinker with a charming personality.

Dr. Chaudhury took a leading part in the activities of the Indian Philosophical Congress, of which he was the Secretary and he was associated with most of the cultural and educational institutions of India and abroad. He acted as the executive member of the Visva-Bharati University and served as an expert of the University Grants Commission as well as the Public Service Commission interview committees.

He visited the United States in 1959-60 as a visiting Fellow of the Cornell University and as a Visiting Professor of the Southern California University. He lectured in the Cleveland Museum of Art and in New York, Boston, Cincinnati and other places and was greeted with warm receptions. On his way back to India, he took part as Vice-Chairman in the Fourth International Aesthetical Congress in Athens in 1960.

Shortly after returning home, while he was enthusiastically busy with his works and plans of another tour to Europe and the States, Dr. Chaudhury was suddenly overtaken by death on May 4, 1961, in the prime of his life. He is survived by both his parents and by his widow, Shrimati Ashabari Chaudhury, daughter of Rai Bahadur N.K.Chaudhury, Advocate and Shrimati Ushabati Devi Chaudhury Saraswati and four young children.

Prof. George Burch of Tufts University speaks about the author and his philosophy :

Dr. Chaudhury approaches philosophy with the background of his deep scholasticity in modern science. His books and his numerous articles published in India and abroad (also in eminent American journals) are concerned mostly with aesthetics and philosophy of science.

Philosophy, Chaudhury maintains, is neither synthesis of science nor something unrelated to science, but a higher level of thought which is implied by science and to which only uncritical scientists fail to be led. While scientific psychology describes objects on a certain level of awareness, philosophy or transcendental psychology analyses the awareness itself and distinguishes its various levels. "A 'plane of reality' (unlike degrees of reality, which exist simultaneously, as in neo-Platonism) is a level of awareness from which all higher levels are ignored as completely unknown and all lower levels are rejected as completely unreal". Illusion is not something to be accepted as real in its own inferior way or to be criticized because of inherent inconsistencies, but is rejected as utterly insignificant. This concept of planes[1] of reality is a classical concept of 'Advaita Vedānta' with its emphasis on the distinction between appearance and reality, but there is disagreement as to the number of planes. According to the acosmists, like Gauḍapāda, the founder of Advaita Vedānta, there is only one plane since the world does not exist even as illusion. According to the subjectivists, like Prakāśānanda, the advocate of monopsychism, there are two planes—illusion and reality. According to the realists, like Śaṅkara, the most famous Vedānta philosopher,[2] there are three planes—empirical illusion, cosmic illusion (empirically real), and reality. According to K.C.Bhattacharya, there are four planes. But according to Chaudhury there are seven. Four are basic,[3] while the other three are transitional, equally actual as levels of awareness but intelligible only in terms of the planes immediately above and below. We can know the existence of planes higher than our own by the testimony of those who have this experience, as reported in mystical literature, and we can try to understand these planes by analogy with our own experience. Chaudhury rejects revelation, but respects the Upaniśads as testimony of their author's experience.

The planes of reality are as follows : (i) The lowest plane (rejected on all others as unreal) is that of dreams, and other such illusions, created by the individual mind. (ii) The second (first transitional) plane is the state of waking up, when the dream images still persist but are recognized as unreal. Day-dreaming is also on this plane. (iii) The third plane is ordinary waking experience. Dream images rejected as unreal are forgotten and so no longer exist even as illusions. The objects of this plane constitute the common empirical world, created not by the individual but by God. (iv) The fourth (second transitional) plane is that of spiritual wakening, the state of the Vedāntic sage who is aware of the unreality of the world.[4] He realizes gradually, first by faith, then by intellect, finally by insight, that the world is illusion. Perception of empirical objects, however, including his own body, persists, so that he still sees the world and himself as an individual in it, and acts accordingly, although he knows better. (v) The fifth plane is that of release from illusion (*mokṣa* or *videhamukti*), when all empirical objects, together with the world, time and individuality, are not only rejected as unreal but completely forgotten and so no longer exist even as illusions. The individual body is freely given up and so dies empirically. Only the self (*jīva*, defined as Brahman distinguished into subjective and objective) remains. It is eternal, since there is no time, and one, since there is no distinction of individuals. Monopsychism (*ekajīvavāda*), implicit on the fourth plane, is explicit on the fifth, and the one self is God (*Īśvara*). Nevertheless, although all objects are gone, objectivity, which is the possibility of objects, remains; the form of objects, although not their matter, remains; the distinction of subject and object, although not the distinction of individuals, remains; in short, the objective attitude remains.[5] Deep dreamless sleep is temporary ascent to this plane. (vi) The sixth (third transitional) plane is the state of expecting, although not realizing, objectivity. It is best understood in the descending direction as Brahman's stirring ("Brahman felt alone," as the Upaniṣads say)—the anticipation of, or in the ascending direction the negation of, that feeling of loneliness which characterizes the fifth plane. This is Brahman (not *jīva* or *Īśvara*) but Brahman subject to illusion. (vii) The highest plane is absolute awareness. Objectivity vanishes, and with it all distinction whatsoever. The only reality is absolute being-consciousness-bliss, Brahman.[6]

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[1] The distinction of planes is most clearly seen in the ordinary experience of waking up from a dream. There is no relation between the objects seen in the dream and those when awake. When dreaming we are completely unaware of the facts of the waking world, and when awake we reject the events of the dream as unreal events having no relevance to real facts.

[2] Śaṇkara's writings allow some scope for interpretation, however, and Advaitins of various schools tend to assimilate him, because of his prestige, to their own views.

[3] These cannot, however, be identified with K.C.Bhattacharya's four planes.

Each plane has its internal ethics, but the transcendental ethical principle is the duty of self-fulfilment by rising to a higher plane. Whatever conduces to this is good. On the third plane this is altruism. There are no interplane obligations. While dreaming we may feel an obligation to help our fellow sufferers in the dream, but after waking it would be absurd to suppose an obligation to go back to sleep and recover the dream in order to help the persons in it. Likewise, while we have an obligation to help our fellows in the empirical world, it would be absurd to acknowledge any obligation to them after spiritual awakening has shown the unreality of that world and all the individuals in it. Chaudhury, like most Vedāntists, rejects the Buddhist concept of the *bodhisattva* (the freed man devoted to the welfare of those still bound) as self-contradictory.

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[4] The so-called *jīvanmukta*, but Chaudhury rejects the classical Advaita doctrine of *jīvanmukti* (complete release from the world while apparently still in it).

[5] The discrimination of this plane is Chaudhury's most original contribution to Vedānta philosophy.

[6] Realism is the correct epistemological theory on the first, third and fifth planes; idealism, on the second, fourth, and sixth; neither, on the seventh.

The two principal problems of philosophy are how we rise to a higher plane and how we fall to a lower plane. We rise from the first to the second plane, that is, wake up from a dream, through any of three causes. (i) Some violent perception from the empirical world, such as a loud sound, may intrude into the dream and shatter it. (ii) A critical analysis of the dream experience from within may show that its fantastic content can be understood only as unreal illusion. (iii) In the absence of either of these causes we shall in any case wake up spontaneously after a short time, as time is reckoned in the waking world, though this may be a long time as reckoned within the dream. We rise to the third plane by accepting the consequences of the rejection of the dream images and so forgetting them. We rise to the fourth plane by causes analogous to those by which we rise to the second. (i) Some stimulus from the higher plane may intrude into the lower one. This is the religious way. "The subtle workings of the higher grade of consciousness in the lower one in order to rouse and raise the subject in the latter is the essence of divine grace,"[7] and this *grace* may be mediated through a *Guru* or through any of the other methods known to religion. (ii) A *critical analysis* of ordinary experience, in accordance with the well known arguments of idealist philosophy, may convince the person who is willing to attend to these arguments that the world is not real but phenomenal. This is the philosophical way. (iii) We may in any case come *spontaneously* to see the unreality of the world, but only after a long time as time is reckoned within the world (the "end of the *kalpa*"). This is the natural way. It presupposes the individual's continued existence by reincarnation. We rise to the fifth plane by accepting the consequences of the negation of the phenomenal world and so forgetting it. We rise to the sixth plane by critical analysis of the subject-object relation. We rise to the seventh plane by insight into reality. In every case the progress is accomplished by *knowledge*, action or emotion playing a subordinate role if any.

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[7] *Aesthetics—a Vedāntic View*, p.6.

Why Brahman should fall to lower planes is an insoluble problem, since there is no reason for it, yet we can describe the six steps of the process in terms of *māyā* and *līlā*, two basic concepts of Vedānta philosophy. *Māyā*, illusion, analogous to evil in Christian philosophy, is essentially inexplicable, but is the cause of the world as we see it. It may have an end, and so a cause of ceasing to be, as discussed in the preceding paragraph, but it has no beginning, and so no cause of coming into being. A dream ends on waking, but within the dream it seems to have been going on from the indefinite past, and likewise with the waking world. *Līlā*, sport, analogous to creation in Christian philosophy, is also inexplicable rationally. Western philosophy thinks of the Creator after the analogy of a human artisan, and so conceives him as creating the world by imposing form (usually thought of as itself an aspect of the Creator) on matter (usually thought of as itself previously created *ex nihilo*) for some purpose, thus raising the difficult but fascinating theological problem of what this purpose might be. Hindu philosophy thinks of the Creator after the analogy of man not working but playing, and so conceives creation as the Creator's spontaneous and purposeless play or sport manifesting his intrinsic exuberance. Brahman, according to Chaudhury, falls to the sixth plane by *māyā* suggesting the idea of objectivity, the primordial illusion. It descends to the fifth plane by *līlā* positing the objectivity so suggested. It descends to the fourth plane by *māyā* suggesting objects made possible by the posited objectivity. It descends to the third plane (the phenomenal world) by *līlā* positing such objects, including the bodies by which individual selves are distinguished from one another, in accordance with the rules of the *game*, which are the laws of nature, especially *karma*, the law of causality. Any individual falls to the second plane by *māyā* defying these laws to suggest objects not determined by them. The individual falls to the first plane by *līlā* positing such unregulated objects.

This elaboration of Advaita Vedānta, by a scholar who is a student of modern science rather than of the Sanskrit classics, is further evidence that Vedānta is still a living philosophy. It draws to its school some of the best minds of India, and it challenges the contemporary philosophies of other traditions as an account of the world and of ourselves.

Prof. Taraknath Sen says:

'I soon sensed his brilliance and there was extraordinary something about him that drew me to him......It was with intense interest that I had been watching his career all these twenty years — his rise to fame as a great teacher, versatile writer and philosopher....Not to speak of his books, the tally of his papers alone published in foreign journals would constitute a fine record for a young man of 44. No praise could be too high for the pains he took... to keep abreast of recent developments in Western philosophy...'one of which the philosophy of science, he was pioneer in this country.'

Sisir Kumar Ghosh Says:

'A Polymath, Dr. Chaudhury taught science, literature, philosophy and versatile copies on Society and Religion or anything else with equal ease and distinction. Latterly he turned to be a specialist in the philosophy of science and aesthetics and quickly won international recognition. The journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism devoted a special number to him, a rare honour for the first time an Asian scholar received. Though such a great thinker so severe and versatile—he was at heart a poet—a "sadhaka"...'

Prof. E.A.Burtt—the 'Sage-professor' of Cornell University (U.S.A) says:

Indian thinkers had gained a far better understanding of the West than Western thinkers had of India... . In general, the Occidental philosophers most carefully studied, and hence most widely known in India.... . Their thought was most nearly akin to the dominant currents of Indian speculation....Thus, just as the West was failing to learn from the major contribution that Indian philosophy can make to the coming world-philosophy.

Professor Chaudhury sees this fact,.....and he deals with it in his own suggestive way. He showed that some of the deeper issues involved in these problems can only be solved by turning to the insight of the Vedanta seers of his own heritage.'...

Satyendranath Bose, National Professor, says:

'Very handsome young Dr. Chaudhury attracted me with his charming personality at the first sight. His deep erudition and vast scholarship attracted attention throughout the academic world. He was constitutionally an original thinker with profound knowledge and power of flowing speech. Almost every philosophical—be it old type metaphysics or of the extramodern 'de-ontology' or literature or any other topic —he always threw new light.

Dr. Thomas Munro says:

'A thorough and original scholar in aesthetics, Dr. Chaudhury understood to an unusual degree both the Eastern and Western contributions,'...

Swami Ananyananda — editor of 'Prabuddha Bharat' says:

'Possessed one of the most remarkable minds to come to the force in Bengal in recent years, Pravas Jivan Chaudhury was scientist, philosopher, litterateur and 'Sadhaka' in One. In the works of Dr. Chaudhury—spiritual knowledge and love are seen to be one. His most precious contributions almost regularly appeared in 'Prabuddha Bharat'. As he was very much connected with the Ramakrishna Mission, he lectured almost every week at the R.M.I.C., Golpark, Calcutta—and also throughout India and abroad about Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda.

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